The TESTIMONY OF JESUS

By F. M. WILCOX

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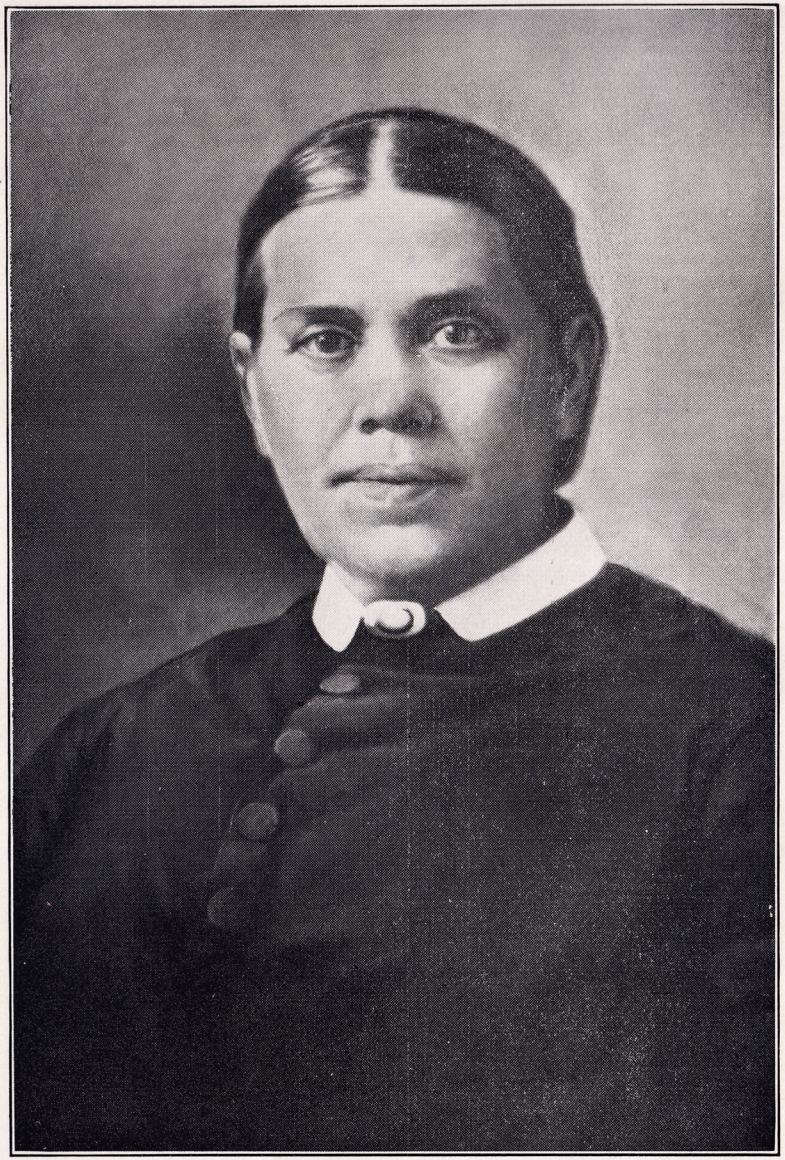

MRS. ELLEN GOULD WHITE

Born at Gorham, Maine, November 26, 1827; Died at St. Helena, California, July 16, 1915; Buried at Battle Creek, Michigan

The Testimony of Jesus

A REVIEW
of the Work and Teachings
of Mrs. Ellen Gould White

By

FRANCIS McLELLAN WILCOX

"The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy."
Rev. 19:10. Cf. Rev. 12:17.

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CHAPTER 1

The Sacred Canon

The Foundation of Christian Doctrine and the Test of Christian Experience

THE Creator of the heavens and the earth has not left Himself without witness to the children of men. The book of nature and the Book of revelation both testify of His infinite power, His unsearchable wisdom, and His boundless love. The myriads of heavenly worlds moving in majestic splendor through the sky, all in orderly array, each in its own orbit; the earth with its towering mountain ranges; the restless and ever-changing ocean, held within its proper bounds by the decree of the Infinite—these exhibitions of His handiwork proclaim His power and majesty to the children of men. And the book of nature reveals His love as well. The life-giving sunshine, the smiling landscape, the joyous bird in the leafy bower, the beautiful flowers decorating the earth, all speak of His love and thoughtfulness for the inhabitants of earth, and the means by which He seeks their happiness and promotes their welfare.

Added to this revelation in the book of nature is the witness of divine revelation in the Holy Scriptures. In this Book is found the expression of the sovereign will, a record of the history of the human family, the sad portrayal of the entrance of sin, the promise of the divine

Saviour, a record of His life and ministry, the directions whereby this sacrifice may be made effective in Christian experience through repentance, confession, and regeneration, and finally the glorious heritage awaiting the children of God throughout the endless ages of eternity.

There were many prophetic writings which for some good reason were not included in the Sacred Canon. The Bible mentions the book of Jasher (Joshua 10:13), the book of Nathan the prophet (2 Chron. 9:29), the book of Gad the seer (1 Chron. 29:29), the story of the prophet Iddo (2 Chron. 13:22), the book of Jehu (2 Chron. 20:34), the prophecy of Ahijah (2 Chron. 9:29), the book of Shemaiah the prophet (2 Chron. 12:15). Of these writings we know little or nothing today except the names. Nor can we be sure that there was included in the Sacred Canon all that Jeremiah or Isaiah or other canonical prophets wrote. Doubtless many of their prophecies had a merely local application. The wisdom of God preserved such instruction as would meet the needs of the church in every period, and which in every age would prove a groundwork "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

The Sacred Canon is unique in this, that in the providence of God it alone of all writings has come down to us bearing the divine credentials. It thus becomes the standard by which every other writing is tested. The writings and work of every succeeding prophet claiming divine inspiration must stand the test imposed by the Sacred Canon of Scripture.

That the Holy Scriptures are an expression of the character and will of God is abundantly attested by many

striking evidences. Consider first the testimony of the Scriptures themselves as to their divine inerrancy.

What the Bible Says of Itself

"More than one thousand times do the writers of the first sixteen books of the Old Testament give the Lord as the authority for what they wrote. David said, 'The Rock of Israel spake to me' (2 Sam. 23:3); and it is recorded that after the death of Moses 'the Lord spake unto Joshua.' Joshua 1:1. Amos said, 'Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken.' Amos 3:1. The prophets, as the name implies, speak supernaturally, and in their writings, more than thirteen hundred times they give credit to the Lord for what they write. New Testament writers quote from fifty-nine different psalms."

Christ placed His approval upon all that the prophets had written. (Luke 24:25; John 5:46, 47.) The prophet Isaiah makes mention of Israel's deliverance as a fact of history. (Isa. 63:11-13.) The apostle Peter places his approval upon the Psalms. (Acts 1:16, 20.) The prophet Malachi indicated his acceptance of the writings of Moses. (Mal. 4:4.) Other references of similar import might be cited in this connection. The manner in which the Scriptures were given and their purpose is thus stated by the apostle Paul:

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

The reference here made is to the Old Testament writings, for when Paul penned these words, the New Testament canon was not compiled; indeed, much of it

was yet unwritten. None of the prophets are excluded; all that was embraced in the Scriptures up to that time is declared to be inspired—"God-breathed." The apostle Peter emphasizes this point. In speaking of the salvation that comes to us through our Lord and Saviour, he says:

"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11.

Here is revealed the manner in which the Scriptures were given. The Spirit of Christ in the prophets testified through them. Then it was not primarily David who spoke, not Isaiah, not Daniel, but Christ speaking through them. The prophets were fallible, sinful men, but saved by grace; and ofttimes they failed to understand their own prophecies, and with others had to search what God had revealed through them, to find that salvation of which they prophesied.

The Spirit carried them out of themselves and beyond their own finite understanding. The prophets prophesied not at will. The Spirit of Christ was not theirs to use at pleasure. Simon Magus thought thus to use the Spirit's power, but suffered a rebuke for his blasphemous audacity. (Acts 8:9-24.)

Again the apostle Peter says:

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:20, 21.

If the prophecy came not by the prophets' own will, if

they spoke only as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, then it was not they that spoke, but the Spirit of Christ speaking through them. They might be sinful men, and the conditions surrounding them might be most forbidding, but that did not invalidate their message. It makes the rarest pearls none the less precious if they are incased in caskets of little worth.

So with God's message. The Bible has been given through instruments of clay, but it is the message of God, however frail and humble may be the channels through which it comes to us. (2 Cor. 4:7.)

The New Testament Scriptures

The same apostolic pronouncement concerning the Old Testament Scriptures applies with equal force to the New. It is safe to conclude that the same Spirit of Christ which was with His prophets would likewise guide His apostles; and that if God directed in the prophecies pertaining to Christ's mission, He would likewise guide in the writing of the history of His Son's earthly work. The truthfulness of the gospel record is attested by the concurrent and harmonious agreement of the four evangelists, who wrote at different times and from different points of view, and probably in general without reference to one another's work. Again, we find that in many respects the book of Revelation is so nearly parallel with the prophecy of Daniel that those who believe the one must also accept the other.

Paul was the writer of the larger number of the epistles, and of him Peter says that he wrote "according to the wisdom given unto him," and classes his epistles with the "other Scriptures." 2 Peter 3:15, 16. Paul himself says of his epistles, "Which things also we speak,

not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." 1 Cor. 2:13.

Of the gospel which he proclaimed, the apostle Paul further declares:

"I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Gal. 1:11, 12.

The importance which the apostle John attached to his writings, is stated in his emphatic declaration which we find in Revelation 22:18, 19.

Then, as we turn to the Bible, we do not read merely the words of Paul, or Peter, or Samuel, or any of the prophets; we read the words of the Lord transmitted through them. Each, in giving his message, could truly say, as did David, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue." 2 Sam. 23:2. No, the words were not David's, but, as Peter declares in Acts 1:16, they were the words "which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake."

CHAPTER 2

The Inspiration of the Bible Writers

The following statement by Mrs. E. G. White, on the inspiration of the Scriptures, presents a safe foundation for the Christian's confidence in God's Holy Word:

The Inspiration of the Word of God

"This is a time when the question with all propriety may be asked, 'When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?'

"Spiritual darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the people. There are in many churches skepticism and infidelity in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Many, very many are questioning the verity and truth of the Scriptures. Human reasoning and the imaginings of the human heart are undermining the inspiration of the Word of God, and that which should be received as granted, is surrounded with a cloud of mysticism. Nothing stands out in clear and distinct lines, upon rock bottom. This is one of the marked signs of the last days.

"This Holy Book has withstood the assaults of Satan, who has united with evil men to make everything of divine character shrouded in clouds and darkness. But the Lord has preserved this Holy Book by His own miraculous power in its present shape,—a chart or guidebook to the human family to show them the way to heaven.

"But the oracles of God have been so manifestly

neglected that there are but few in our world, even of those who profess to explain it to others, who have the divine knowledge of the Scriptures. There are learned men who have a college education, but these shepherds do not feed the flock of God. They do not consider that the excellencies of the Scriptures will be continually unfolding their hidden treasures as precious jewels are discovered by digging for them.

"There are men who strive to be original, who are wise above what is written, therefore their wisdom is foolishness. They discover wonderful things in advance, ideas which reveal that they are far behind in the comprehension of the divine will and purposes of God. In seeking to make plain, or to unravel mysteries hid from ages from mortal man, they are like a man floundering about in the mud, unable to extricate himself, and yet telling others how to get out of the muddy sea they themselves are in. This is a fit representation of the men who set themselves to correct the errors of the Bible. No man can improve the Bible by suggesting what the Lord meant to say or ought to have said.

"Some look to us gravely and say, 'Don't you think there might have been some mistake in the copyist or in the translators?' This is all probable, and the mind that is so narrow that it will hesitate and stumble over this possibility or probability, would be just as ready to stumble over the mysteries of the Inspired Word, because their feeble minds cannot see through the purposes of God. Yes, they would just as easily stumble over plain facts that the common mind will accept, and discern the Divine, and to which God's utterance is plain and beautiful, full of marrow and fatness. All the mistakes will not cause trouble to one soul, or cause any feet to stumble,

that would not manufacture difficulties from the plainest revealed truth.

"God committed the preparation of His divinely inspired Word to finite man. This Word arranged into books, the Old and New Testaments, is the guidebook to the inhabitants of a fallen world; bequeathed to them, that by studying and obeying the directions, not one soul would lose its way to heaven.

"Those who think to make the supposed difficulties of Scripture plain, in measuring by their finite rule that which is inspired and that which is not inspired, had better cover their faces, as Elijah when the still small voice spoke to him; for they are in the presence of God and holy angels, who for ages have communicated to men light and knowledge, telling them what to do, and what not to do, unfolding before them scenes of thrilling interest, waymark by waymark in symbols and signs and illustrations.

"And He has not, while presenting the perils clustering about the last days, qualified any finite man to unravel hidden mysteries, or inspired one man or any class of men to pronounce judgment as to that which is inspired or is not. When men, in their finite judgment, find it necessary to go into an examination of Scriptures to define that which is inspired and that which is not, they have stepped before Jesus to show Him a better way than He has led us.

"I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in an entire Bible. Men arise who think they find something to criticize in God's Word. They lay it bare before others as evidence of superior wisdom. These men are, many of them, smart men, learned men, they have eloquence and talent, the whole

lifework is to unsettle minds in regard to the inspiration of the Scriptures. They influence many to see as they do. And the same work is passed on from one to another just as Satan designed it should be until we may see the full meaning of the words of Christ, 'When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?'

"Brethren, let not a mind or hand be engaged in criticizing the Bible. It is a work that Satan delights to have any of you do, but it is not a work the Lord has pointed out for you to do.

"Men should let God take care of His own Book, His Living Oracles, as He has done for ages. They begin to question some parts of revelation, and pick flaws in the apparent inconsistencies of this statement and that statement. Beginning at Genesis they give up that which they deem questionable, and their minds lead on, for Satan will lead to any length they may follow in their criticism, and they see something to doubt in the whole Scriptures. Their faculties of criticism become sharpened by exercise, and they can rest on nothing with a certainty. You try to reason with these men, but your time is lost. They will exercise their power of ridicule even upon the Bible. They even become mockers, and they would be astonished if you put it to them in that light.

"Brethren, cling to your Bible, as it reads, and stop your criticisms in regard to its validity, and obey the Word, and not one of you will be lost. The ingenuity of men has been exercised for ages to measure the Word of God by their finite minds and limited comprehension. If the Lord, the Author of the Living Oracles, would throw back the curtain and reveal His wisdom and His glory before them, they would shrink into nothingness and exclaim as did Isaiah, 'I am a man of unclean lips, and I

dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.' Isa. 6:5.

"Simplicity and plain utterance are comprehended by the illiterate, by the peasant, and the child as well as by the full grown man or the giant in intellect. If the individual is possessed of large talents of mental powers, he will find in the Oracles of God treasures of truth, beautiful and valuable, which he can appropriate. He will also find difficulties, and secrets and wonders which will give him the highest satisfaction to study during a long lifetime, and yet there is an infinity beyond.

"Men of humble acquirements, possessing but limited capabilities and opportunities to become conversant in the Scriptures, find in the Living Oracles comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam. No one need be lost for want of knowledge, unless he is willfully blind.

"We thank God that the Bible is prepared for the poor man as well as for the learned man. It is fitted for all ages and all classes."—*E. G. White MS 16. Written at Minneapolis, Minn., Fall of 1888.*

Objections to the Bible

"Human minds vary. The minds of different education and thought receive different impressions of the same words, and it is difficult for one mind to give to one of a different temperament, education, and habits of thought by language exactly the same idea as that which is clear and distinct in his own mind. Yet to honest men, right-minded men, he can be so simple and plain as to convey his meaning for all practical purposes. If the man he communicates with is not honest and will not want to see and understand the truth, he will turn his words and language in everything to suit his own purposes. He will

misconstrue his words, play upon his imagination, wrest them from their true meaning, and then intrench himself in unbelief, claiming that the sentiments are all wrong.

"This is the way my writings are treated by those who wish to misunderstand and pervert them. They turn the truth of God into a lie. In the very same way that they treat the writings in my published articles and in my books, so do skeptics and infidels treat the Bible. They read it according to their desire to pervert, to misapply, to willfully wrest the utterances from their true meaning. They declare that the Bible can prove anything and everything, that every sect proves their doctrines right, and that the most diverse doctrines are proved from the Bible.

"The writers of the Bible had to express their ideas in human language. It was written by human men. These men were inspired of the Holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of human understanding of language, or the perversity of the human mind, ingenious in evading truth, many read and understand the Bible to please themselves. It is not that the difficulty is in the Bible. Opposing politicians argue points of law in the statute book, and take opposite views in their application and in these laws.

"The Scriptures were given to men, not in a continuous chain of unbroken utterances, but piece by piece through successive generations, as God in His providence saw a fitting opportunity to impress man at sundry times and divers places. Men wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. There is 'first the bud, then the blossom, and next the fruit,' 'first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.' This is exactly what the Bible utterances are to us.

"There is not always perfect order or apparent unity in the Scriptures. The miracles of Christ are not given in

exact order, but are given just as the circumstances occurred, which called for this divine revealing of the power of Christ. The truths of the Bible are as pearls hidden. They must be searched, dug out by painstaking effort. Those who take only a surface view of the Scriptures, will, with their superficial knowledge, which they think is very deep, talk of the contradictions of the Bible, and question the authority of the Scriptures. But those whose hearts are in harmony with truth and duty will search the Scriptures with a heart prepared to receive divine impressions. The illuminated soul sees a spiritual unity, one grand golden thread running through the whole, but it requires patience, thought, and prayer to trace out the precious golden thread. Sharp contentions over the Bible have led to investigation and revealed the precious jewels of truth. Many tears have been shed, many prayers offered, that the Lord would open the understanding to His Word.

"The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes.

"The stamps of minds are different. All do not understand expressions and statements alike. Some understand the statements of the Scriptures to suit their own particular minds and cases. Prepossessions, prejudices, and passions have a strong influence to darken the understanding and confuse the mind even in reading the words of Holy Writ.

"The disciples traveling to Emmaus needed to be disentangled in their interpretation of the Scriptures. Jesus

walked with them disguised, and as a man He talked with them. Beginning at Moses and the prophets He taught them in all things concerning Himself, that His life, His mission, His sufferings, His death were just as the Word of God had foretold. He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. How quickly He straightened out the tangled ends and showed the unity and divine verity of the Scriptures. How much men in these times need their understanding opened.

"The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

"It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the Word of God."—*E. G. White MS 24. Written in Europe in 1886.*

CHAPTER 3

A Unique Book

WHEN we come to study the Scriptures as we would the writings of men, we find much in the comparison which indicates that the Bible occupies a unique place among all writings extant. It speaks with an authority all its own. It is written in a style which, while it appeals directly to the heart, stirring to action the emotions of the soul, likewise convinces the judgment of the wisdom and truthfulness of its utterances. Evidences both external and internal go to show that He who spoke as never man spake, has traced in the Holy Scriptures His own divine will concerning the children of men. Among some of the further evidences that the Bible is the book of God, we will mention the following:

1. Its Authority.—It speaks with assurance. It has no apologies to make for its statements. It comes with simple but direct and convincing power to the reader; and well it may, because it is the message of the infinite God to His children.

2. Its Comfort.—It carries a message of hope and courage and comfort for every soul. This is the message we would expect to come from the God it represents, a Being of love and mercy and tender compassion.

3. Its Truthfulness.—No one has been able successfully to challenge the veracity of its statements. History corroborates its truthfulness. The spade of the archae-

ologist is demonstrating every year the reliability of the divine record.

4. Its Perfection.—Its divine Author commands its readers, "Be ye perfect as I am perfect," and in the divine revelation is found the embodiment of this perfection. A perfect God could give nothing less than a perfect standard; and in His infinite mercy, while He calls men to perfection, He vouchsafes to them the power of His Holy Spirit for the attainment of that end. He calls to divine sonship, and He gives power whereby this relationship to the family of God may be attained. If the Bible were false, God would be compelled, in the very nature of the case, to give us some other revelation of His will. A God of love could do no less than this. He would not be true to His character of love and beneficence, as revealed in the book of nature and in the Inspired Word, if He did not give to the creatures of His hand a revelation of the principles of His government and a knowledge of His divine will.

5. Its Unity of Thought and Teaching.—It contains sixty-six divisions, or separate books. These were written by at least forty different writers, covering a period of about sixteen hundred years. The utterances of these writers constitute a perfect and harmonious whole. This is all the more remarkable when we consider that these writers lived in different ages, in different countries, and under greatly varying conditions so far as their civil, social, and religious environments were concerned. The fact that men scattered all along the stream of time, from Moses, the writer of the Pentateuch, to John, who penned the Revelation, should write on such a variety of topics, and yet preserve in all their work such unity of sentiment and teachings, shows that their utterances were directed

by one Master Mind. The unity of the Bible points to God as its author.

6. Its Simplicity and Sublimity.—In this Book the loftiest ideas are expressed in the simplest terms; the grandest truths are told with a directness that appeals to the heart; the lives of its characters are described without false coloring or prejudice. It has been said truly that the most sublime utterances ever voiced in human speech are the words found in the first chapter of Genesis, "God said, Let there be light: and there was light," and the prayer of our Saviour on Calvary's cross, "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do." The style employed throughout the Bible is worthy of a divine Being. In it there is no cheapness. The language is free from affectation. A simple, positive directness characterizes the Word, which leads the thoughts of the reader to the divine Being instead of to fallible man.

7. Its Adaptability to the Needs of the Human Family in Every Age.—The sacred canon was completed nearly two thousand years ago, some portions of the Scripture being written no less than thirty-five hundred years ago. And yet all its writers enunciate truths which are as applicable to the human family today as when they were uttered. Indeed, the Bible is so adaptable that it is suited to men of every nationality and color, to the human family in every period of this world's history, to the dwellers in every latitude and longitude of the earth. And it is adapted as well to all periods of development, to every state of mentality. The little child may find in it the way of life, the heavenly manna adapted to its growing needs. The man of mature age and experience also can find truths more profound, and suited to his larger capabilities and capacities.

8. Its Absolute Impartiality.—The books of men have their heroes and their heroines. Their writers are oftentimes moved by class or racial prejudices. It has been truly said that no man can be a true historian of his own day and generation, because of the influence of environment upon his character. The writers of the Book of God were raised above their environment. Their class and racial prejudices were subordinated to their grand objective. In the hands of God they became His agents for the transmission of His divine will to the children of men. He who can dethrone kings, exalt the lowliest to the highest stations of the earth, and countermand the word or will of the mightiest potentates, need make no appeal to personal favor. Character alone commends itself to His approbation. The inspired penman spares not to point out the sin of Solomon, the wisest of all earth's rulers; and the double sin of David, the sweet singer of Israel. The divine chastening rod fell upon Moses, the one who talked with God face to face as a man talks with his friend. In its absolute impartiality the Divine Word is in a class by itself, separate from all other books.

9. Its Depth.—Its wisdom is unsearchable. Human wisdom cannot fathom its depth of meaning. David the shepherd, Amos the herdsman, Peter the fisherman, have written truths so wonderful and far-reaching in their meaning as to be utterly incomprehensible in their fullness, even to the learned of the ages, without the aid of the Divine Spirit. It is possible for men to penetrate to the depth of thought in the writings of human authors. Not so with the writings of God. Every study brings new revelation and freshness of beauty and of color. The very mysteries of the Bible are evidence of an eternal mind.

10. Its Predictions.—Closely allied to its mysteries are its predictions. The prophecies of the Bible constitute a most forceful evidence of divine authorship. The mind of man cannot penetrate the future. He cannot tell with absolute certainty what a single day will bring forth, what scenes wait on the morrow in his experience, or in the experience of his fellow men. In the Scriptures of truth the future is clearly revealed. The rise and fall of kings are accurately forecast. Even the birth of certain men and the work they would accomplish, are foretold. To the divine mind the future is as the present. God's foreknowledge is absolute. In no book of merely human authorship is this power revealed.

11. World-wide Influence of the Bible.—The world owes much to the influence of the Sacred Word. Following its divine commission, the heralds of the cross have penetrated everywhere in the promulgation of its teaching. They have explored dark continents and searched out the great unknown. It was Livingstone and Moffat who opened up Africa, Carey and Judson whose influence brought Christian civilization to India and the Orient. It was Williams and Paton and others who sailed uncharted seas of heathen Polynesia, bringing the isolated island savages into touch with the great pulsating world.

The heralds of the cross have been the advance guards of civilization. The missionary fires kindled by their ardor and enthusiasm have proved the beacon lights for the rallying forces of education, enlightenment, and progress. In the path of these valiant soldiers have followed the railway, the telegraph, the telephone, and other effective commercial and civilizing agencies. As the result of missionary influence, churches have been developed, schools opened, and hospitals established. Barbarous

practices and customs have given place to the rule of justice and the arts of peace.

What would Africa be today without the mighty changes which have been wrought by the influence of Christianity? Indeed, what would the Anglo-Saxon race be but wandering nomads, had not their forefathers accepted the benign influence of the gospel of Christ? Even China and Japan of our own day, although maintaining their heathen beliefs, have been mightily influenced by the heralds of the cross.

12. Its Transforming Power in Individual Life.—The transforming power of the Word of God is seen even more significantly in individual experience. It has been in every age the hope of the oppressed. What would life be worth, with all its stern realities, wearing perplexities, and sore disappointments, without the hope of a future life, without the staff of support and solace and comfort to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ?

The Divine Word takes man in his natural condition —selfish and self-centered, the prey of lust and passion, swayed by caprice, by avarice, by anger—and transforms him into a being of noble purposes and generous impulses. It converts the drunken sot into a gentleman of refinement; the savage cannibal into a humble follower of Christ, who loves and seeks to save his enemy. It elevates, purifies, and ennobles all who accept its holy principles, and who shape their lives in harmony with its precepts. "The words that I speak unto you," declares the Master, "they are spirit, and they are life." They will indeed prove to be life and salvation to every sincere believer who gives heed to them.

CHAPTER 4

The Gifts of the Spirit

SINCE the close of the Sacred Canon, nearly two thousand years ago, there have been no additions to this compilation of sacred books. Very evidently, in the order of God, none will ever be made. The Holy Scriptures, as they have come down to us through the centuries, will constitute until the end of time the supreme standard of Christian doctrine and experience.

But the closing of the Scripture canon did not mark the cessation of Heaven's communication with man. In His divine wisdom and foresight, Christ bestowed upon His church certain spiritual gifts for the edification and upbuilding of His followers. These gifts are enumerated by the apostle Paul as follows:

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." 1 Cor. 12:4-11.

The same Holy Spirit which inspired the Divine Word, known to us as the Bible, also reveals Himself to

the church through these spiritual gifts. There is, therefore, no discord or lack of harmony in these two methods of divine communication. The gifts do not take the place of the Word, nor does their acceptance make unnecessary the Scriptures of truth. On the other hand, the acceptance of the Word and its teachings leads to the acceptance of the gifts of the Spirit. This was so well expressed by Elder J. N. Andrews, for a short time president of the General Conference, that his statement is well worthy of consideration in this connection:

1. "We understand that the Holy Scriptures are divinely inspired, and that they contain the truth of God which is able to make us wise unto salvation.

2. "But we do not understand that the gift of the Scriptures to mankind supersedes the gift of the Holy Spirit to the people of God.

3. "On the contrary, we do believe that the Scriptures plainly reveal the office and work of the Holy Spirit; which office and work can never cease while man remains upon probation.

4. "This work of the Holy Spirit is revealed to us in the Bible doctrine of spiritual gifts.

5. "While therefore we do heartily accept the Scriptures as teaching man's whole duty toward God, we do not deny the Holy Spirit that place in the church which the Scriptures assign to Him.

6. "Those who reject the work of the Spirit of God under the plea that the Scriptures are sufficient, do deny and reject all that part of the Bible which reveals the office and work of the Holy Spirit.

7. "Thus 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4, which define the gifts of the Spirit of God, cannot really form a part of the rule of life of those who affirm that the Scriptures are so sufficient in themselves that the gifts of the Spirit are unnecessary.

8. "The Bible expressly teaches that the existence of these gifts is as necessary to the church of Christ as the different members are necessary to the well-being of the body. While, therefore, the Bible recognizes the gifts of the Spirit, these are not given to supersede the Bible, nor yet to fill the same place as the Bible.

9. "The object of spiritual gifts is to maintain the living work

of God in the church. They enable the Spirit of God to speak in the correction of wrongs and in the exposure of iniquity. They are the means whereby God teaches His people when they are in danger of taking wrong steps. They are the means by which the Spirit of God sheds light upon church difficulties, when otherwise their adjustment would be impossible. They also constitute the means whereby God preserves His people from confusion by pointing out errors, by correcting false interpretations of the Scriptures, and by causing light to shine out upon that which is in danger of being wrongly understood, and, therefore, of being the cause of evil and division of the people of God. In short, their work is to unite the people of God in the same mind and in the same judgment, upon the meaning of the Scriptures. . . . It would be sad indeed if God could not still converse with His people.

10. "One of the chief gifts of the Spirit of God that He has placed in the New Testament church is the gift of prophecy. (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:1-4, 17, 18; 1 Cor. 12: 1-31; 14:1-5; Eph. 5:11-13.) This gift the Bible connects with the closing work of this dispensation. (Rev. 12:17; 14:12; 19:10.) Spiritual gifts do not, therefore, cease to be of importance in the sight of God, nor in that of His true people. And that message which is to accomplish the perfecting of the saints and to fit them for translation, has the Spirit of God connected with it, and speaking out in the management of its work."—*Review and Herald, Feb. 15, 1870.*

The Gift of Prophecy

The gift of prophecy does not belong to any one age. Both the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures have come to us through this gift of the Spirit, manifested through the various Bible writers. Through the prophets of the Old Testament it was revealed that the gift of prophecy would be manifested in New Testament times. This is pointed out in a very direct and positive manner by the prophet Joel in the following words:

"It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see

visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." Joel 2:28-32.

This prophecy began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Answering the charge of their critics that the men filled with the Spirit on this occasion were under the influence of strong drink, the apostle Peter declares:

"This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: and the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:16-21.

Fulfilling Joel's Prophecy

But this was only a partial fulfillment of the prophetic utterance of Joel. The prophet declares that these manifestations of the spiritual gifts should be witnessed in the last days, and particularly in connection with the signs of Christ's coming, as shown in the heavens, namely, the turning of the sun into darkness and the moon into blood.

The "last days" must include the last day of this earth's history. They must therefore embrace the days in which we live and all future days, even until the coming

of the Lord. This prophecy of Joel, therefore, is a last-day prophecy. It bears out the statement already made, that the gifts of the Spirit belong to the church in every age. To the truth of this, the apostle Paul bears very positive witness. Speaking of the gifts which God has placed in the church, he declares:

"He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Eph. 4:11-14.

The unity of the faith has not yet been fully attained by the church of Christ; she has not yet arrived unto the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, or unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. There is still need that she be saved from false winds of doctrine, from the sleight of men and their cunning craftiness. Therefore the gifts of the Spirit of God are as greatly needed in the church today as ever before in her history.

The Testimony of Christ

That the gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of prophecy, should be manifested in the church, even until the coming of the Lord, the apostle Paul bears testimony:

"I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 1:4-8.

While this word of the apostle was spoken to the Corinthian church and evidently described the state of preparedness possessed by that church, we may also believe that the statement was of prophetic significance, that it describes the conditions of the church which will be actually "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Of this church the apostle declares, "The testimony of Christ was confirmed in you." What is the testimony of Christ which was to be confirmed in the church that was looking for the coming of the Lord? In the book of Revelation, John gives a definition of this term. When he was about to fall at the feet of the angel and accord to him divine worship, the angelic messenger said:

"See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." Rev. 19:10.

Confident Conclusion

If, then, the testimony of Christ, which John declares is the Spirit of prophecy, is to be confirmed in the church that is looking for the coming of the Lord, we may confidently expect that the Spirit of prophecy will be manifested in this last-day church. This conclusion is attested by the statement contained in Revelation 12:17.

"The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The dragon, Satan, has always sought the destruction of the church of God. His wrath is particularly drawn out against the remnant, or last division, of that church, because they have taken their stand in obedience to the commandments of God, and because there is manifested among them the testimony of Jesus, or the Spirit of prophecy.

From these statements of divine revelation we must conclude, therefore, that the special gifts of the Spirit of God, including that of prophecy, were given for every age of the church, and would be especially manifested among the saints who will be prepared to meet Christ at His coming.

CHAPTER 5

A Movement of Prophecy

DURING the history of the church there have been a number of great religious movements which were movements of prophecy. The migration of Israel from Canaan to Egypt was foretold to Abraham:

God "said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." Gen. 15:13-16.

The Divine Record is that at the end of this predicted period, "even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." Ex. 12:41.

The great religious awakening under John the Baptist, preceding the first advent of Christ to this earth, was a movement of prophecy. When the Jews sent priests and Levites to inquire of John, "Who art thou?" "Art thou Elias?" "What sayest thou of thyself?" John replied, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." John 1:21-23. The work of John was a fulfillment of divine prediction, and he understood the character of his work and the source of his divine call.

The great second advent movement, now doing its

work among the many nations of men, is a movement of prophecy. Long years ago the prophets of God pointed out that the coming of the Lord would be ushered in by a series of unusual manifestations in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; that there would go to the world, based upon these signs, a last warning message, like that given to the antediluvian world by Noah. This message would be a message of reform, calling the church back from the darkness into which it had been drawn by the subtle snares of the enemy, into the clear light of divine revelation. This last-day message would proclaim Christ as the one Saviour from sin; His righteousness as the one passport to the heavenly home; that by the operations of the Holy Spirit, His divine law should be written upon the heart; and as a result of His enabling power, this law should be expressed in the life. (See Joel 2:1; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 14:6-12.)

ISRAEL A TYPE

The exodus of Israel of old from Egypt to the land of Canaan was typical in many ways of the exodus of the children of God from this world of sin to the heavenly Canaan. The exodus movement had connected with it a prophet of the Lord, who by his instructions guided the church in their wanderings through the wilderness. Declares the prophet Hosea, "By a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved." Hosea 12:13.

A striking characteristic of the remnant church was to be the manifestation in it of the Spirit of prophecy. Declares the apostle John of the remnant or last division of the Christian church: "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her

seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17. This testimony of Jesus Christ is later explained by the angel to be the Spirit of prophecy. (Rev. 19:10.)

This gift of prophecy, we affirm, has been manifested in the life and work of Mrs. Ellen G. White, connected with this movement from 1844 until the year 1915, when she was laid to rest. This remarkable woman gave many evidences of her divine call, and confirmed, in the minds of those who were acquainted with her experience, the definite belief that through her the gift of prophecy was manifested.

Evidences of the Divine Call

1. The harmony of Mrs. White's teachings with the great standard of all truth and doctrine, the Holy Scriptures. If she was possessed of the gift of the Spirit, in the very nature of the case this would be so. A lack of harmony between her teachings and the teachings of the Bible would indicate that her claims were false.

2. Her writings are not set forth as an addition to the Sacred Canon. On the contrary, their object is to exalt that word. The great principles of truth expressed in the Bible have been drawn out in finer detail and applied to the various phases of Christian experience and life's varying circumstances.

3. On many occasions, in striking instances and in marvelous ways, God used His messenger to save His church in severe crises from mistakes or divisions, and to safeguard His people from specious error in doctrine or in Christian experience.

4. She showed throughout her entire experience deep spiritual vision and strength of character in the active part

she bore in the development of every phase of the second advent movement. Her testimony was and is a ringing call to deeper consecration, to the putting away of sin, to the enthronement of Christ in the heart, to more active Christian service in the homeland and in the great mission fields. Her life and labors proved a mighty incentive to the carrying of the gospel message to earth's remotest bounds.

5. Her messages make a direct appeal to the heart, and are proving in thousands of lives a transforming power, and an inspiration to Christian service.

6. Her life and Christian experience conformed to the pure, simple, dignified principles of the gospel of Christ. She exemplified in her own life, as does every true prophet, the principles of truth she taught to others.

7. The correspondence of the physical manifestations in many of her visions to the experience of the prophets of old. We refer to the physical manifestations under which many of these visions were given, similar to the experience of Daniel and other prophets of the Old Testament.

We do not, however, regard these physical manifestations as the principal convincing evidences of the divine call to Mrs. White. Rather, they constitute subsidiary or contributing evidences. The great proof of her call to divine ministry was shown in the answer of her work to prophetic prediction; in the spirit which characterized her ministry throughout the years; in the correspondence of her teachings to those of the Bible; in the marked manner in which she was used of God to save His church in many crises; by the fruit her ministry bore through all the years of her earthly life, and fruit which is still appearing as a result of her labors.

Witness of a Co-worker

As a fitting commentary upon her work, we believe that the following statement from the pen of Uriah Smith, for nearly forty years one of the editorial staff of the *Review and Herald,* who was intimately acquainted with Mrs. White, will be of interest:

"From the very commencement of the third angel's message, there have been visions among us. They have been received by the body as genuine manifestations of the Spirit of God. They have comforted the desponding, and corrected the erring. They have confirmed the doubting, and strengthened the weak. And the truest friends of the cause have cherished and loved them most. It must be a radical revolution, therefore, that would lead us to abandon these for the uncertainties of the future. But as such manifestations were to be in the church, the whole weight of evidence goes in favor of these, unless it can be shown that they are positively and radically defective.

"How then shall we satisfy ourselves on this point? The Bible gives us an infallible test for all these things. By 'the law and the testimony,' and 'by their own fruits,' we are to judge them. Whatever contradicts in no slightest particular the law and the testimony, and in addition to this tends to elevate, ennoble, and purify, we may be sure comes from above, and not from beneath. But these manifestations do in the strictest manner accord with the teachings of the Word of God, and lead us to study and prize it; while we might safely challenge the world to show a single instance where their influence has tended to depravity and corruption, or where it has not, on the other hand, tended to lead all who would receive them, to holiness and purity of heart."—*Review and Herald, Jan. 13, 1863.*

CHAPTER 6

Concord of Church Teaching

We are living in days of changing emphasis, particularly as relates to the faith of the great Christian church. Many doctrines which were held as the main pillars of Christian faith fifty years ago, are discarded today. This change of viewpoint discredits the Word of God. Revealed truth of today will not destroy or contradict the revealed truth of yesterday.

Is the teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the present time with respect to the gifts of the Spirit, particularly the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, in accord with the teachings of this church in the beginning of its history? We answer unqualifiedly, Yes. The church holds today the same position regarding this doctrine that it has in years gone by. It could not be true to the teaching of the Sacred Canon and believe otherwise, because the doctrine of spiritual gifts is clearly set forth in the Sacred Record, and that record is as true at the present time as in the beginning of the second advent movement.

It is interesting in this connection to give a brief review of some quotations expressing the faith of the church through the years, as recorded in the general church paper of the denomination. We do not quote entire statements, but only such portions as bear directly upon the subject in hand. We give, however, with each quotation, the reference where the full text may be found. These statements are from leading men who, because of the official posi-

tion they occupied, may be most fitly cited as stating the faith of themselves and their associates.

Tested by the Bible

Our first statement is from the *Review and Herald* of December 4, 1855. This is a portion of an "Address of the Conference Assembled at Battle Creek, Mich., Nov. 16, 1855," and is made "in behalf of the Conference," and signed by "Joseph Bates, J. H. Waggoner, M. E. Cornell." After an introduction, the address continues:

"We refer to the visions which God has promised to the remnant 'in the last days.' We are aware that many will regard it as infatuation to believe in such operations of God's Spirit in these days; and we may by some be classed with the Spiritualists so well known in this age. We have ever considered Spiritualism the work of the enemy, and it is generally conceded that Satan is to show his signs and wonders previous to the second coming of our Lord; yet it is as plainly written that the Lord will pour out His Spirit in the last days; and as we are shielded from a strong delusion by a proper application of the Scriptures concerning the work of these spirits, so we believe that we may receive of the choice blessings of God by acknowledging the force of the promises of His Spirit. . . .

"Nor do we, as some contend, exalt these gifts or their manifestations above the Bible; on the contrary, we test them by the Bible, making it the great rule of judgment in all things; so that whatever is not in accordance with it, in its spirit and its teachings, we unhesitatingly reject. But as we cannot believe that a fountain sends forth at the same place sweet water and bitter, or that an evil tree brings forth good fruit, so we cannot believe that is of the enemy which tends to unite the hearts of the saints, to lead to meekness and humility and holy living, and incites to deep heart searching before God, and a confession of our wrongs. As having such a tendency we recommend to your candid consideration the contents of the book entitled *Experience and Views* [now *Early Writings,* pp. 11-127], believing them to be agreeable to the Word of God and the spirit of the gospel. . . .

"While we regard them as coming from God, and entirely harmonizing with His written word, we must acknowledge ourselves under obligation to abide by their teachings, and be corrected by their admonitions. To say that they are of God, and yet we will not be tested by them, is to say that God's will is not a test or rule for Christians, which is inconsistent and absurd."

The Gifts and the Word

James White, at that time the recognized leader of the Sabbathkeeping Adventists, not yet known as Seventh-day Adventists, wrote in the *Present Truth* of December, 1849:

"The Bible is our lamp, our guide. It is our rule of faith and practice; still there is no reason why God may not give special revelations to lead the erring to God and His living Word."

Again a few years later he wrote in the *Review and Herald,* under date of February 28, 1856:

"God set the gifts in the church. (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 12:27-31; Eph. 4:11-16.) There is no evidence that they were given for a limited portion of the Christian age, to be removed from the church, and she be left for a long time without them. And more, the prophecy of Joel quoted by Peter (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:1-22) and other portions of Scripture, furnish sufficient grounds for faith that, in connection with the last message of mercy, the gifts will be restored to a living church. . . .

"The prophecy of Joel (chapter 2:28-32) has its fulfillment in the 'last days.' It was written for the benefit of the remnant. The remnant mentioned in verse 32, who find deliverance, are evidently the same as in Revelation 12:17, with whom the dragon is wroth. And why wroth? Because they keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. What is the testimony of Jesus Christ? We will let the angel who addressed John answer the question. He says, 'The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy.' Rev. 19:10. Says Joel, 'Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.' The remnant of both texts are evidently the same. No one, then, need marvel because the dragon's ire is stirred, on seeing the 'Spirit of prophecy' revive in the church. . . .

"As all objections against the revival of the gifts can be fully

met, then we inquire, What is their object? Were they designed to take the place of the Word? Never! If the gifts be revived, and the church receive instruction from them, will not this supersede the necessity of searching the Scriptures for truth and duty? No! Never! . . .

The Word in Front

"The following we take from an article we wrote on this subject, published in the first volume of the *Review and Herald,* April 21, 1851:

" 'Every Christian is therefore in duty bound to take the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and duty. He should pray fervently to be aided by the Holy Spirit in searching the Scriptures for the whole truth and for his whole duty. He is not at liberty to turn from them to learn his duty through any of the gifts. We say that the very moment he does, he places the gifts in a wrong place, and takes an extremely dangerous position. The Word should be in front, and the eye of the church should be placed upon it, as the rule to walk by, and the fountain of wisdom, from which to learn duty, in "all good works." But if a portion of the church err from the truths of the Bible, and become weak and sickly, and the flock become scattered, so that it seems necessary for God to employ the gifts of the Spirit to correct, revive, and heal the erring, we should let Him work. Yea, more, we should pray for Him to work, and plead earnestly that He would work by the Spirit's power, and bring the scattered sheep to His fold. Praise the Lord, He will work. Amen.' "

"Visions and Prophecy—Have They Been Manifested Among Seventh-day Adventists?"

Under this heading George I. Butler, then president of the General Conference, wrote a series of articles for the *Review and Herald,* concluding with the article of June 9, 1874. We quote only from this last article:

"Here we leave the Bible argument. To our mind we have proved beyond a reasonable doubt that these visions are just such as the Bible teaches are given through the influence of the Holy Spirit.

We have shown that the gifts of the Spirit were to be perpetuated in the church, that they were to be seen in the last days. We have taken the tests given in the Bible to show the difference between the spurious and the genuine, and every rule given proves these to be true. We have noticed nearly every instance where the nature of the manifestations of true visions in the Bible is given, and we find these exactly similar. We are compelled, therefore, to conclude that these are genuine visions of the Spirit of the Lord, or that the Bible has left us wholly unable to determine between the true and the spurious.

"As the Scriptures are designed to 'thoroughly furnish' the man of God unto all good works, we can rely upon them in this case. We believe these visions because the Bible teaches them. We use the rules given in that Holy Book, and are forced to the conclusion that the manifestations are the work of the Spirit of God. Instead of our setting up these visions above and outside of the Scriptures as another rule of authority, as our opponents pretend, we claim that none can really take the Bible and fairly apply its teachings without accepting these visions as from God. The Bible is the supreme authority in deciding this as well as other questions. When it tells us to 'try the spirits,' to 'prove all things' and 'hold fast that which is good,' it is our duty to do this. We find by so doing that these visions harmonize perfectly with the Scriptures. . . .

"We have tested them as a people for nearly a quarter of a century, and we find we prosper spiritually when we heed them, and suffer a great loss when we neglect them. . . . They never have led us into fanaticism in a single instance, but they have ever rebuked fanatical and unreasonable men. They everywhere direct us to the Scriptures as the great source of true instruction, and to the example of Jesus Christ as the true pattern. They never claim to be given to take the place of the Bible, but simply to be a manifestation of one of those spiritual gifts set in the church by its divine Lord; and as such should have their proper weight.

"We admit that their influence upon Seventh-day Adventists during their past history has been weighty, but it has always been for good, and has always had a tendency to make us better people. Having been in exercise for so many years among us, we are certainly prepared to judge by this time in regard to the nature of their teachings."

CHAPTER 7

Teachings of the Church in Recent Years

WE come now to a later period in the history of the church. Have the leaders of the church continued to hold the same faith regarding the subject of spiritual gifts and the manifestation of the gift of prophecy as did those early leaders who have passed from the stage of action? We answer, They have. Mrs. E. G. White died July 16, 1915. Funeral services were conducted at the Tabernacle in Battle Creek, Michigan, July 24, 1915. A report of these services was published in the *Review and Herald* of August 5 of that year. From the paper of this date we take the following quotation from a statement made at the funeral regarding the work of Mrs. E. G. White, by A. G. Daniells, president of the General Conference for twenty-one years:

"Her life of full surrender, obedience, and unceasing prayer for divine help was rewarded by the bestowal of the gift of prophecy, one of the choicest of all the gifts of the Spirit.

"In December, 1844, the Holy Spirit gave her a revelation of the second coming of Christ. In this vision of the future there was given a view of the glorious reward that awaits the redeemed and the terrible fate that will come to all who refuse to serve their Lord and Master. This view of the destiny of the human family made a profound impression on her. Here she received her appointment as a messenger of God. She felt that God was commanding her to give this message of light and salvation to others.

"This was a great trial to her. She was but seventeen years old,

small, frail, and retiring; but after a long, severe struggle, she surrendered to the call of her Lord, and then she was given strength for her lifework.

"Following this surrender and victory there came to her a series of remarkable spiritual experiences, unmistakably genuine, and regarded by her associate workers of that day as a manifestation of the gift of prophecy promised by Christ to the remnant church. Those who have been associated with her through all the years that have passed since that time, never have had occasion to alter their conviction that the revelations which have come to her through the years have come from God. . . .

"No Christian teacher in this generation, no religious reformer in any preceding age, has placed a higher value on the Bible. In all her writings it is represented as the Book of all books, the supreme and all-sufficient guide for the whole human family. Not a trace of higher criticism, new thought, or skeptical, destructive philosophy can be found in any of her writings. Those who still believe that the Bible is the inspired, infallible word of the living God, will value most highly the positive, uncompromising support given this view in the writings of Mrs. White.

"In her teaching, Christ is recognized and exalted as the only Saviour of sinners. Emphasis is placed upon the bold and unqualified announcement of the disciples that 'there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' The power to redeem from the power and effects of sin is in Him alone, and to Him all men are directed.

"Her writings hold firmly to the doctrine that the gospel, as revealed in the Sacred Scriptures, presents the only means of salvation. None of the philosophers of India nor the codes of morals and ethics of Burma and China are given any place whatever with the gospel of the Son of God. This alone is the hope of a lost world. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead and Christ's representative on earth, is set forth and exalted as the heavenly teacher and guide sent to this world by our Lord to make *real* in the hearts and lives of men all that He had made *possible* by His death on the cross. . . .

"The church instituted by our Lord and built up by His disciples in the first century is set forth as the divine model. Its prerogatives and authority are fully acknowledged, and all its ordi-

nances and memorials are observed. Strong emphasis is placed on the value of gospel order and organizations revealed in the Scriptures for the efficiency of the church in all its world-wide operations.

"Through the light and counsel given her, Mrs. White held and advocated broad, progressive views regarding vital questions that affect the betterment and uplift of the human family from the moral, intellectual, physical, and social standpoint, as well as the spiritual. Her writings are full of instruction, clear and positive, in behalf of a broad, practical Christian education for every young man and young woman. In response to her earnest counsels the denomination with which she was associated now maintains a system of education for all its children and young people.

"Her writings present the most comprehensive views regarding temperance reform, the laws of life and health, and the use of rational, effective remedies for the treatment of sickness and disease. The adoption of these principles has placed the people with whom she worked in the front ranks with others who are advocating sane temperance reforms, and working for the physical improvement of mankind.

"Nor is the social status of the human family lost sight of. Slavery, the caste system, unjust racial prejudices, the oppression of the poor, the neglect of the unfortunate, are set forth as unchristian and a serious menace to the well-being of the human race, and as evils which the church of Christ is appointed by her Lord to overthrow. . . .

"As we survey the whole field of gospel truth—of man's relation to his Lord and to his fellow men—it must be seen that Mrs. White's lifework has given these great fundamentals positive, constructive support. She has touched humanity at every vital point of need, and lifted it to a higher level."

Not a Dictator

In the *Review and Herald* of July 29, 1915, I. H. Evans, at that time president of the North American Division Conference, gave this expression as to his faith regarding the work of Mrs. E. G. White:

"Sister White was in the first advent movement of 1844, and tasted all the bitter disappointment of those who looked for the

second coming of Christ at that time. She, with others, suffered all the reproach cast upon that movement by the scoffers of that day. While many became confused, and in their disappointment gave up their belief in the 1844 movement, she with a few faithful associates searched the Scriptures till light came to them, showing the error in their prophetic interpretation.

"When the new light came to her and her husband, Elder James White, they gladly received it, and at once began preaching it to their disappointed brethren. Little by little God lifted the curtain of darkness; and as they saw rays of light, they followed on to know the Lord, and more and more they were led to acknowledge the hand of God in leading them all the way. As time passed, the message grew both in its doctrines and in its scope and world-wide proportions. Neither Sister White nor any of the believers in that early day comprehended the greatness of the work set before them. Still the message has grown till it has attained its present proportions, and now encircles the earth.

"During those early years of development, much depended upon the unity and faith of the believers. On many occasions when the little companies were uncertain in their course, or were divided in their councils, Sister White presented what God had shown her in dream or vision, and plainly marked the way this people should go. The church has ever tried and intended to follow this instruction; because of it strong men have changed their viewpoint; policies have been modified to harmonize with it, that unity might prevail. Here and there from time to time some have broken from the denomination, under the leadership of those who refused to accept the instruction given; but all this breaking away has come to naught, and most of those who departed from the light given have made sad shipwreck of their faith.

"Sister White has never claimed to be the leader of the Adventist Church. Again and again she has defined her work as merely a voice—a messenger bearing a message from God to His people to bring them to Christ. She has never assumed the role of dictator to the church. She has publicly and in her writings proclaimed Christ as the head of His church on earth, and always urged the people of every communion to make Him their counselor and guide.

"The influence of Sister White on our denomination has been

marked and strong. She continually so called the church to a deeper consecration, so urged the ministry to a more holy life and active service, and so exalted Christ as the mediator between God and man, that she was a great spiritual factor in holding the church to a spirit of sacrifice and missionary endeavor. Her voice ever called for advance moves. . . .

"Her Christian life was marked by deep personal piety; she had great faith in prayer, and was zealous in her spiritual devotions. Her charities were liberal beyond her means; she was ever impoverishing herself by her gifts to the cause she loved and by her care for the poor and needy."

"A Supernatural Manifestation"

W. A. Spicer, at that time president of the General Conference, prepared in 1929 a volume, *The Certainties of the Advent Movement.* On page 202 and onward he speaks of the work of Mrs. E. G. White as follows:

"In earliest times and in the extreme youth of the human agent called to the exercise of this gift, the very use of the gift carried the credentials of its genuineness. The gift was for practical service. It was a time of religious tension and confusion of thought among the large Adventist body in New England following the disappointment of 1844. Out of that disappointment was to come the definite movement of the prophecy bearing its message to all the world.

"Just there it was that the hand of God was revealed through this gift pointing the way. As we have seen, Miss Harmon's first vision, in December, 1844, was a description in miniature of the progress of the movement from 1844 to the city of God. With the relation of the experience and the vision, conviction came to sober, earnest hearts that God was sending messages to men. The duty was pressed upon this young woman to go from company to company, directing minds to patient searching of the Scriptures and holding on to the hope of Christ's second coming. Fanaticism began to come in and every wind of doctrine was blowing. There it was that a young girl of seventeen, unused to public life, shrinking from the thought of presuming of herself to instruct others, was called to stand beside gray-haired ministers of God, or to stand alone bearing the message which she dared not withhold. . . .

"It was not a natural thing, but a supernatural manifestation as the voice of the youthful messenger bore counsels on questions of order and government and organization. Rich as were the later years in instruction to the Adventist people, no years seem more marvelously to manifest the divine origin of this gift than those early years, when a young woman at seventeen and eighteen and onward was bearing messages that stand to this day as strong counsels in the matter of organization and the conduct of religious work, and above all emphasizing the necessity of a spiritual experience rooted in a living Saviour and in the living Word of God. . . .

"Through all the years the agent chosen was faithful to the task. Human, fallible, often bearing witness to her own need of forgiving grace and keeping power, the instrument did yield itself for service. There was nothing in the life strained or unnatural, though the working of the gift itself and the fruitage of it bore constant witness to the supernatural. Like many another, Mrs. White was in personal life a good mother in Israel. There was no lifting up of self, no assumption of leadership in the movement, but a faithful bearing of messages as the Lord sent counsel and light."

Speak the Words of Truth and Righteousness

The last statement we shall give regarding the position of the church on the subject of spiritual gifts is the action taken by the General Conference Autumn Council, held in Battle Creek, Michigan, October 18-26, 1932. There was prepared for adoption by this council a letter addressed to the church in Europe, its statement adapting in part the words of an early pioneer, Uriah Smith. After unanimous approval by the delegates, this letter, signed by C. H. Watson and C. K. Meyers, president and secretary, respectively, of the General Conference, was sent to our believers in Europe. We quote a part of this letter as published in the *Review and Herald* of November 24, 1932:

"We also believe that the Holy Scriptures, which constitute the ground of faith and practice for the church,

teach that spiritual gifts will continue to be manifested in the church until 'that which is perfect is come.' (See 1 Cor. 13:10; Eph. 4:13.) Our faith in this doctrine is confirmed by the assurance given through the apostle Paul to the advent people when he said, 'So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.' 1 Cor. 1:7, 8.

"We believe that the writings of Mrs. E. G. White were given to the church through the manifestation of the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, not as a substitute for the Holy Scriptures nor as a new rule of faith, but for the spiritual uplift of the church, for instruction, for warning, for reproof, for admonition, and for the special guidance of God's people through the perils of the last days. This was the belief of the pioneers of this movement, and it is our abiding belief today, for the reason that both their faith and ours is founded on the teachings of the Scriptures.

"The writings of the Spirit of prophecy always lead us to the Bible. They set forth that Book as the inspired and infallible word of God. These writings exhort us to take that word as the man of our counsel and the rule of our faith. As evidence of this we quote from the first bound volume given to this people through this gift as follows: 'I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the last days, not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth.'—*Christian Experience and Views (1851), p. 64.*

"The fruit of these writings is such as to reveal that their origin is of God. They lead to the most perfect standard of morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass on our way to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have protected us from fanatical and unreasonable men and movements. They have exposed hidden iniquity, and have brought to light concealed wrongs, laying bare the evil motives of the falsehearted. They have repeatedly aroused the church to greater consecration to God and to more zealous efforts for the salvation of the lost and erring.

"They lead us to Christ. Like the Bible, they set Him forth as the only hope and only Saviour of mankind. They portray before us in living characters His holy life and His godly example, and with irresistible appeals they urge us to follow in His steps.

"They have brought comfort and consolation to many hearts. They have strengthened the weak, encouraged the feeble, raised up the despondent. They have brought order out of confusion, made crooked places straight, and thrown light on what was dark and obscure. We believe that no person with an unprejudiced mind can read their stirring appeals for a pure and lofty morality, their exaltation of God and the Saviour, their denunciations of every evil, and their exhortations to everything that is holy and of good report, without being compelled to say, These writings do verily 'speak forth the words of truth and soberness.' "

CHAPTER 8

Recognizing the Divine Call

WHEN God, by His Holy Spirit, calls men to the work of apostles or prophets, will they themselves recognize the source of their call? We believe they will. This has been demonstrated many times in the history of the church. Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets of the Old Testament era well understood the work they were given to do and the authority by which they were to utter their messages of warning and reproof.

The apostle Paul declared that he was called, not of men, but of God, and he tells repeatedly how God laid upon him the apostleship to the Gentile world. When messengers from the Jewish authorities interrogated John as to his mission, they were met with no cringing or apologetic excuse. He knew the work that God had called him to do. He declares in unmistakable terms: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."

Did Mrs. E. G. White recognize her call to holy office? She came with no high-sounding titles, with no vainglorious pretensions, with no ostentatious show. She was instructed that she was the Lord's messenger. She recognized this call and proved true to her divine commission. In the *Review and Herald* of July 26, 1906, she discussed in considerable detail the work to which she had

been called. We believe it will be profitable, in this connection, to read this statement. We therefore reproduce it entire:

THE LORD'S MESSENGER

"Last night, in vision, I was standing before an assembly of our people, bearing a decided testimony regarding present truth and present duty. After the discourse, many gathered about me, asking questions. They desired so many explanations about this point, and that point, and another point, that I said, 'One at a time, if you please, lest you confuse me.'

"And then I appealed to them, saying: 'For years you have had many evidences that the Lord has given me a work to do. These evidences could scarcely have been greater than they are. Will you brush away all these evidences as a cobweb, at the suggestion of a man's unbelief? That which makes my heart ache is the fact that many who are now perplexed and tempted are those who have had abundance of evidence and opportunity to consider and pray and understand; and yet they do not discern the nature of the sophistries that are presented to influence them to reject the warnings God has given to save them from the delusions of these last days.'

"Some have stumbled over the fact that I said I did not claim to be a prophet; and they have asked, Why is this?

"I have had no claims to make, only that *I am instructed that I am the Lord's messenger;* that He called me in my youth to be His messenger, to receive His word, and to give a clear and decided message in the name of the Lord Jesus.

"Early in my youth I was asked several times, Are you a prophet? I have ever responded, I am the Lord's messenger. I know that many have called me a prophet, but I have made no claim to this title. My Saviour declared me to be His messenger. 'Your work,' He instructed me, 'is to bear My word. Strange things will arise, and in your youth I set you apart to bear the message to the erring ones, to carry the word before unbelievers, and with pen and voice to reprove from the word, actions that are not right. Exhort from the word. I will make My word open to you. It shall not be as a strange language. In the true eloquence of simplicity, with voice and pen, the messages that I give shall

be heard from one who has never learned in the schools. My Spirit and My power shall be with you.

" 'Be not afraid of man, for My shield shall protect you. It is not you that speaketh: it is the Lord that giveth the messages of warning and reproof. Never deviate from the truth *under any circumstances*. Give the light I shall give you. The messages for these last days shall be written in books, and shall stand immortalized, to testify against those who have once rejoiced in the light, but who have been led to give up because of the seductive influences of evil.'

No Pretentious Claims

"Why have I not claimed to be a prophet? Because in these days many who boldly claim that they are prophets are a reproach to the cause of Christ; and because my work includes much more than the word 'prophet' signifies.

"When this work was first given me, I begged the Lord to lay the burden on someone else. The work was so large and broad and deep that I feared I could not do it. But by His Holy Spirit the Lord has enabled me to perform the work which He gave me to do.

"God has made plain to me the various ways in which He would use me to carry forward a special work. Visions have been given me, with the promise, 'If you deliver the messages faithfully and endure to the end, you shall eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and drink of the water of the river of life.'

"The Lord gave me great light on health reform. In connection with my husband, I was to be a medical missionary worker. I was to set an example to the church by taking the sick to my home and caring for them. This I have done, giving the women and children vigorous treatment. I was also to speak on the subject of Christian temperance, as the Lord's appointed messenger. I engaged heartily in this work, and spoke to large assemblies on temperance in its broadest and truest sense.

"I was instructed that I must ever urge upon those who profess to believe the truth, the necessity of practicing the truth. This means sanctification, and sanctification means the culture and training of every capability for the Lord's service.

"I was charged not to neglect or pass by those who were being

wronged. I was specially charged to protest against any arbitrary or overbearing action toward the ministers of the gospel by those having official authority. Disagreeable though the duty may be, I am to reprove the oppressor, and plead for justice. I am to present the necessity of maintaining justice and equity in all our institutions.

"If I see those in positions of trust neglecting aged ministers, I am to present the matter to those whose duty is to care for them. Ministers who have faithfully done their work are not to be forgotten or neglected when they have become feeble in health. Our conferences are not to disregard the needs of those who have borne the burdens of the work. It was after John had grown old in the service of the Lord that he was exiled to Patmos. And on that lonely isle he received more communications from heaven than he had received during the rest of his lifetime.

An Example to Others

"After my marriage I was instructed that I must show a special interest in motherless and fatherless children, taking some under my own charge for a time, and then finding homes for them. Thus I would be giving others an example of what they could do.

"Although called to travel often, and having much writing to do, I have taken children of three and five years of age, and have cared for them, educated them, and trained them for responsible positions. I have taken into my home from time to time, boys from ten to sixteen years of age, giving them motherly care, and a training for service. I have felt it my duty to bring before our people that work for which those in every church should feel a responsibility.

"While in Australia I carried on this same line of work, taking into my home orphan children who were in danger of being exposed to temptations that might cause the loss of their souls.

"In Australia we also worked as Christian medical missionaries. At times I made my home in Cooranbong an asylum for the sick and afflicted. My secretary, who had received a training in the Battle Creek Sanitarium, stood by my side, and did the work of a missionary nurse. No charge was made for her services, and we won the confidence of the people by the interest that we manifested in the sick and suffering. After a time the Health Retreat at Cooranbong was built, and then we were relieved of this burden.

"To claim to be a prophetess is something that I have never done. If others call me by that name, I have no controversy with them. But my work has covered so many lines that I cannot call myself other than a messenger, sent to bear a message from the Lord to His people, and to take up work in any line that He points out.

"When I was last in Battle Creek, I said before a large congregation that I did not claim to be a prophetess. Twice I referred to this matter, intending each time to make the statement, 'I do not claim to be a prophetess.' If I spoke otherwise than this, let all now understand what I had in mind to say was that I do not claim the title of prophet or prophetess."

Giving the Same Message

"I understand that some were anxious to know if Mrs. White still held the same views that she did years ago when they heard her speak in the sanitarium grove, in the Tabernacle, and at the camp meetings held in the suburbs of Battle Creek. I assured them that the message she bears today is the same that she has borne during the sixty years of her public ministry. She has the same service to do for the Master that was laid upon her in her girlhood. She receives lessons from the same Instructor. The directions given her are, 'Make known to others what I have revealed to you. Write out the messages that I give you, that the people may have them.' This is what she has endeavored to do.

"I have written many books, and they have been given a wide circulation. Of myself I could not have brought out the truth in these books, but the Lord has given me the help of His Holy Spirit. These books, giving the instruction that the Lord has given me during the past sixty years, contain light from heaven, and will bear the test of investigation.

"At the age of seventy-eight I am still toiling. We are all in the hands of the Lord. I trust in Him; for I know that He will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in Him. I have committed myself to His keeping.

" 'And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.'

"Sanitarium, Calif., June 29, 1906."

The Order of Prophets

The term "prophet" as used in the Bible is a broad and comprehensive one. It is employed to designate a man or woman engaged in a wide range of service in connection with the work of God. Some of the "prophets" never uttered a prophecy in the customary use of that term, so far as appears in the Sacred Record. Some were used only for a special occasion, others for a long series of years. Some wrote out the messages God gave them, others spoke only orally. To some, as in the case of Daniel and others, were given prophecies reaching into the distant future, portions of which are still unfulfilled. To others were given messages of local application only, suited to a particular time or occasion. Some were God's messengers, raised up in periods of great crisis, to warn the church and the world of threatened judgments, and to call men back to allegiance to God. Such were Samuel, Elijah, John the Baptist, and others.

"In the highest sense the prophet was one who spoke by direct inspiration, communicating to the people the messages he had received from God. But the name was given also to those who, though not so directly inspired, were divinely called to instruct the people in the works and ways of God."—*Education, p. 46.*

But while acting in various capacities—as judges, kings, prime ministers, counselors, teachers, and preachers—these men of God all belonged to the order of prophets and were used by Him as His chosen instruments. We cannot determine the position occupied by each one in the prophetic scale. If we were to attempt to do this, naturally we should place Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel ahead of John the Baptist. We should consider their long years of service, the far-reaching import of their prophecies. But of John—the Lord's voice or messenger—who, so

far as we have any record, uttered no far-reaching prophecies, and who disclaimed the prophetic title, the Master declared: "Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist." Luke 7:28.

In the foregoing statement Mrs. White does not claim the title of prophet, nor does she disclaim it. She has "no controversy" with those who call her by that name. She declares that God called her to be His messenger; that her work included "more than the word 'prophet' signifies." When we come to consider the multiplicity of her labors in the church, the various capacities in which she ministered, we can understand the distinction she makes.

Relation to Prophets of Old

What relation, then, may we conclude, does the work of Mrs. White bear to the work of the prophets of old? The Lord did not give to her long lines of symbolic prophecy, as He did to Daniel and to John the revelator; in these days, just before the coming of the Lord, these would not be indicated. He did not make her a judge and lawgiver as He did Moses, nor a ruler of state as He did David. Rather, she filled the position of a great teacher in Israel, as did Samuel; of a great reformer, as did Elijah; of a special messenger of God, as did John the Baptist.

She lived in an age of fulfilling prophecy, in a time of marked spiritual declension, when multitudes were turning from the Word and commandments of God to the traditions of men. She was commissioned as Heaven's special messenger of warning and reproof to turn men back to God and to His Word. In visions and dreams she was

instructed concerning the work of God, and was given the messages she was to bear.

Like God's messengers of old, her work belongs to the prophetic order. As this movement answers to the fulfillment of prophecy, so does her work meet the divine prediction that the Spirit of prophecy would be connected with this movement. (Rev. 12:17; 19:10.) By the same Spirit by which the prophets and messengers of old were guided in their work, she was directed and guided in her work as God's messenger to the church in this generation.

"In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the Testimonies of His Spirit."—*Testimonies, Vol. V, p. 661.*

Final judgment upon her work should not be determined by some detail, by the turn of a phrase or sentence, or by some seeming contradiction in her writings, but by the spirit which characterized her work through the years, by the fruit it has borne in connection with the great religious movement with which it was associated, and in the development of which it bore a prominent part and exerted a molding influence.

CHAPTER 9

Of Human or Divine Origin?

THE work being carried forward by Seventh-day Adventists is a movement of prophecy. We believe that in the order and purpose of God it fulfills the specifications of divine prediction. It is proclaiming to the nations of men the gospel of the kingdom, the glad news of the return of Christ to this earth to bring to a grand consummation the plan of salvation, to destroy sin from His universe, and to receive His people unto Himself.

As we have stated in preceding chapters, this last-day gospel movement was to have associated with it the gift of the Spirit of prophecy. As a church "waiting for the coming of the Lord," it should have the "testimony of Christ" confirmed in it, and should "come behind in no gift." 1 Cor. 1:6, 7. The Divine Record reads that in the closing conflict the dragon would make war against the remnant of the church because that church keeps the commandments of God and has the testimony of Jesus, and this testimony of Jesus, by the same authority, is declared to be the Spirit of prophecy. (Rev. 12:17; 19:10.)

Are the claims of Mrs. E. G. White to her call as the Lord's messenger to be accredited as the fulfillment of this prediction? They must be accepted in this manner or be rejected altogether. Either Mrs. White was, as she claimed, a messenger of the Lord, and as the Lord's messenger received divine revelations in visions and

dreams, or she stands convicted as a base impostor. Her work must either be accepted for what it purports to be, or be rejected altogether. No halfway position can be taken. The inspiration of her ministry is either from above or from beneath. It bears the credentials of heaven or the stamp of Satan. Regarding this, she herself said:

" 'God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs, and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God, or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil.'

"As the Lord has manifested Himself through the Spirit of prophecy, 'past, present, and future have passed before me. I have been shown faces that I have never seen, and years afterward I knew them when I saw them. I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind; and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent, and, arriving at a crisis, have saved great disaster to the cause of God. This has been my work for many years. A power has impelled me to reprove and rebuke wrongs that I had not thought of. Is this work of the last thirty-six years from above, or from beneath?'

"Christ warned His disciples: 'Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.' Here is a test, and all can apply it if they will. Those who really desire to know the truth will find sufficient evidence for belief."—*Testimonies, Vol. V, pp. 671, 672.*

Some are inclined to minimize the importance of these messages, and by specious reasoning and hyper-

critical distinctions to confuse minds as to their character and value. They would have it appear that some of the messages coming from the messenger of the Lord were inspired and others were not; that the question as to what is inspired and what is not inspired is one which each individual may determine for himself.

The Human and the Divine

In this critical way the Scriptures are regarded by many in the great religious world, and this attitude of mind has led to their rejection in whole or in part by many professed religious teachers. When one begins to measure the Bible by his own standard of judgment, by his own likes and dislikes, by his own bias and prejudice, it is easy to see the final conclusion which will be reached—a rejection of all inspiration. This places the human above the divine and makes the creature a judge of the Creator. Faith has no part in this transaction. The question of inspiration, and for that matter the whole scheme of salvation, is reduced to the level of human reasoning, and man, by this process, resolves himself into his own savior.

The Bible must be accepted or rejected as a whole. Before its inspired statements, human reasoning must fall and vain imaginations be cast down. This sort of philosophy and similar reasoning will lead to the utter rejection of the teachings which have come to us through the gift of prophecy which God has set in His church.

When Samuel reached that place in his experience where "all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord," it is very evident that each individual testimony he bore was not to be subjected to the divine test as to whether or not he was a prophet of the Lord. He had already given

evidence of his prophetic call, and the fruit of his ministry proved him to be a true prophet of the Lord. His work was "established"; and thus it must be with the writings of anyone whom God has manifestly called to be His messenger. After he has given evidence of his divine call, when it is seen that word and work bear the divine credentials and are in harmony with the requirements of divine revelation, then his subsequent testimony is to be accepted as truth. Each individual utterance, each witness he bears, is not to be subjected to human scrutiny and human reasoning, but is to be received as the revelation of God to His church, unless there might be a rare instance where there is clear evidence that the prophet has apostatized, who, like the former prophet Balaam went "astray, . . . who loved the wages of unrighteousness." 2 Peter 2:15.

Inspiration and Endowment

The church of God through the years has been blessed with many gifts. As Heaven has set these various gifts in the church for the symmetrical and balanced development of the believers, the Spirit of God has given inspiration or endowment for service. These gifts are specifically named by the apostle Paul:

> "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." 1 Cor. 12:8-11.

The apostle declares that "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Verse 4. Through the cen-

turies God has given some men the gift of apostleship, and He has endowed them for this important service. He has given to others the gift of healing, to others the gift of tongues, to others the gift of wisdom, to others the discerning of spirits, and to others the gift of prophecy. Such great leaders of past ages as Luther, Wesley, Miller, James White, and others were given the gift of apostleship—leadership. They were endowed for this work, but this endowment was not inspiration such as is possessed by the prophet. None of these men claimed to have divine revelations. They were not honored with heavenly visions and dreams. Their endowment was for a different work.

Mrs. E. G. White possessed the prophetic gift and divine inspiration in a sense not possessed by an apostle or teacher. She claimed divine revelations, and the character of her work and the fruit it has borne in harmony with the requirements of Scripture, attest the truthfulness of her claims.

"How Didst Thou Write?"

We may see things in relation to the work of Mrs. White which we do not understand. Ancient Israel saw things which they could not understand in the work of the prophets of olden days. When Jeremiah came to the king and princes of Israel with his warning, predicting the downfall of Jerusalem and calling upon the people to repent, he was met with the same questioning which is now given by some to the writings of the Lord's messenger. Of the princes it is said:

"They asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth? Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book." Jer. 36:17, 18.

And later some of these men, in their determination to evade the plain instruction of the Lord, charged upon Baruch the responsibility of setting Jeremiah against them, of poisoning his mind, and thus being responsible for the warnings which the prophet gave them.

"It came to pass, that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the Lord their God, for which the Lord their God had sent him to them, even all these words, then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely; the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there: but Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captive into Babylon." Jer. 43:1-3.

How strikingly this illustrates objections which we hear against the writings of Mrs. White today!

Unwarranted Distinctions

Some have made a fine distinction between the various writings of Mrs. White. They have claimed that articles written by her for different periodicals should be regarded merely as we regard articles from any other writer, and that they should not be received with the same appeal as her printed books; that many of her communications should be classed merely as letters. We have the utmost confidence in the honesty and sincerity of the one whom God appointed as His special messenger to His church. Assuredly, if she was true to her sacred trust, she would not write out her own personal ideas, and send these out *as messages from the Lord.* To credit her with doing this would be to charge her with rank dishonesty and gross misrepresentation.

This does not say, by any means, that every letter

that Mrs. White ever wrote was written under the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord. It does not imply that what she said in ordinary conversation was necessarily directed of God. She never made any such claim as this. Mrs. White sometimes gave expression to her own personal views, but she always pointed to the Bible as the guidebook which all should follow, and frankly and honestly altered or reversed her *personal* opinion if God revealed to her through the Bible or by a vision of His Spirit that she was in error, even as did Nathan the prophet in the personal advice he gave King David regarding the building of the temple. (See 2 Sam. 7:1-17.) She considered herself a sinner saved by grace, and like the apostle Paul, was earnestly pressing forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We must believe that what she gave, by either voice or pen, in printed page or through the medium of correspondence, *as the messages of God,* was true to this representation. We must accept her statement as true relative to this, or else reject altogether her call to the prophetic office. Regarding her communications, sent out in these various ways, the messenger of the Lord, in a letter addressed to the church in Battle Creek, says:

"When I went to Colorado, I was so burdened for you, that, in my weakness, I wrote many pages to be read at your camp meeting. Weak and trembling, I arose at three o'clock in the morning to write to you. God was speaking through clay. You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision—the precious rays of light shining from the throne."—*Testimonies, Vol. V, p. 67.*

Some years later, speaking of her books, she wrote:

"Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world."—*Colporteur Evangelist, p. 36.*

On another occasion she appealed to some in the church not to make those criticisms and fine distinctions which would take all the point and power from the Testimonies. She argued that the Testimonies must be inspired of God, and therefore accepted as such; or they must come from Satan, and therefore be rejected in their entirety. We read:

"And now, brethren, I entreat you not to interpose between me and the people, and turn away the light which God would have come to them. Do not by your criticisms take out all the force, all the point and power, from the Testimonies. Do not feel that you can dissect them to suit your own ideas, claiming that God has given you ability to discern what is light from heaven, and what is the expression of mere human wisdom. If the Testimonies speak not according to the Word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be united. For Christ's sake, do not confuse the minds of the people with human sophistry and skepticism, and make of none effect the work that the Lord would do. Do not, by your lack of spiritual discernment, make of this agency of God a rock of offense whereby many shall be caused to stumble and fall, 'and be snared, and be taken.' "—*Testimonies, Vol. V, p. 691.*

General and Personal Testimonies

Personal testimonies and testimonies of a general character were borne by Mrs. White. Many of these personal testimonies are included in her published books. Some of them dealt with particular matters in the personal life or home of the individual, and were not included in the collection of *Testimonies for the Church.*

Often the correction administered was received, and brought forth fruit unto righteousness. Some of the instruction given in this way was rejected.

The same as the writings of some of the prophets of old were excluded from the Sacred Canon, so, evidently, the servant of the Lord was given wisdom as to what personal testimonies to include and what to exclude from her printed writings. She gave personal supervision to the preparation of her books; and in her long ministry, with a competent corps of secretaries who assisted her, she was able to select from her manuscripts those documents which, in the wisdom given her of the Lord, she felt were of general application and best fitted and designed for general circulation.

CHAPTER 10

Not an Addition to the Sacred Canon

Do the writings of Mrs. E. G. White constitute for the church of Christ a new Bible? We answer emphatically, No. Do they constitute an addition to the Sacred Canon? We answer again unqualifiedly, No, indeed. In what we term the Holy Bible there is comprehended an all-sufficient revelation, revealing man's origin, the entrance of sin, the provisions of divine grace for his redemption as represented in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the necessary steps to make the gospel effective in human experience through the work of repentance and the exercise of faith by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and the final awards of life and death to be meted out to those who accept of this free salvation or to those who reject the proffers of God's great mercy.

God in His providence selected from the writings of the prophets of the past those portions which contain that expression of His divine will best suited to constitute a great spiritual guidebook for all nations, times, and conditions. It evidently was not the divine purpose that any instruction which His Spirit might impart to His church in the latter days should be regarded as an addition to the completed canon of Scripture.

Not only should Mrs. White's writings be regarded as making no addition to the Bible, but only as they stand the test of the Sacred Canon can their claims be accepted.

Indeed, it is by the Bible that the writings of Mrs. E. G. White and of every other person claiming divine revelation, are to be judged. The Bible is the great gauge, or rule, by which all other writings are tested and proved. To the truthfulness of these statements the Lord's messenger bears decided testimony. We quote from one of her leading publications as follows:

"In His Word, God has committed to men the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experiences. 'Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.' 2 Tim. 3:16, 17, R. V.

"Yet the fact that God has revealed His will to men through His Word, has not rendered needless the continued presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Saviour, to open the Word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings. And since it was the Spirit of God that inspired the Bible, it is impossible that the teaching of the Spirit should ever be contrary to that of the Word.

"The Spirit was not given—nor can it ever be bestowed—to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the Word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. Says the apostle John, 'Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.' 1 John 4:1. And Isaiah declares, 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' Isa. 8:20." —*The Great Controversy, Introduction, p. vii.*

Presented "in a False Light"

Mrs. White declares not only that the Testimonies are not "an addition to the Word of God," but that those who teach them in this manner present them "in a false light." The main purpose of the Testimonies is to give a

clearer understanding of the Scriptures. The Word of God deals with great general principles. Mrs. White in her writings has taken these great principles and drawn them out in detail. The great truths of the Bible are simplified. We quote again:

"'Brother R would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is an addition to the Word of God; but in this he presents the matter in a false light. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people to His Word, to give them a clearer understanding of it.' 'The Word of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind, and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the Word of God their study, are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the Word that they have neglected to follow.' 'The Word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the Testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles.' "—*Testimonies, Vol. V, pp. 663, 664.*

"The written Testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God's Word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given, and in His own chosen way brought them before the people, to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse. . . . The Testimonies are not to belittle the Word of God, but to exalt it, and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all."—*Id., p. 665.*

Mrs. White's Estimate of the Bible

Mrs. White's understanding of the relationship sustained between her writings and the Bible was again clearly set forth in these words:

"Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light."—*Colporteur Evangelist, p. 37.*

The esteem in which Mrs. White held the Word of God and the manner in which she commended its study to others, are well expressed in the following words:

"What book can compare with the Bible? An understanding of its teachings is essential for every child and youth, and for those of mature age; for it is the Word of God, given to guide the human family to heaven. In the world today there are gods many and doctrines many. Without an understanding of the Scriptures it is impossible for the youth to understand what is truth, or to discern between the sacred and the common.

"The Word of God should stand as the highest educating book in our world, and should be treated with reverential awe. It should be placed in the hands of the children and youth as the great lesson book, that they may know Him whom to know aright is life eternal. . . .

"What more important knowledge can be gained than that which outlines the fall of man, and the consequences of that sin which opened the floodgates of woe upon the world; which tells of Christ's first advent? The incarnation of Christ, His divinity, His atonement, His wonderful life in heaven as our advocate, the office of the Holy Spirit,—all these vital themes of Christianity are revealed from Genesis to Revelation. Each is a golden link in the perfect chain of truth. Why, then, should not the Scriptures be exalted in every school in our land?"—*Counsels to Teachers, p. 427.*

The Bible Alone Our Rule of Faith

Every doctrine is to be tested by the Sacred Word. If any belief does not stand this test, it is of darkness and not of light.

"However much one may advance in spiritual life, he will never come to a point where he will not need diligently to search the Scriptures; for therein are found the evidences of our faith. All points of doctrine, even though they have been accepted as truth, should be brought to the law and to the testimony; if they cannot stand this test, 'there is no light in them.' "—*Testimonies, Vol. V, p. 575.*

"Do not make the Sabbath school lessons dry and spiritless. Leave the impression upon the mind that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is our rule of faith, and that the sayings and doings of men are not to be a criterion for our doctrines or actions."—*Testimonies on Sabbath School Work, p. 32.*

"The Bible is our rule of faith and doctrine. There is nothing more calculated to energize the mind and strengthen the intellect than the study of the Word of God. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts or give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God's Word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose that are rarely seen in these times." —*Gospel Workers, p. 249.*

The Foundations of Our Faith

The foundations of the faith held by Seventh-day Adventists rest on the Word of God. They were developed by the study of this Word. This is well stated by James White in the *Review and Herald* of October 16, 1855:

"But what deserves especial attention here, is the unrighteous use some are making of the visions. They take advantage of the common prejudices against visions, misrepresent them, and those who are not ready to join them in anathematizing them as the work of Satan, then brand any view held by the body of Sabbathkeepers as the 'vision view,' and not the Bible view of the subject. In this way an unhallowed prejudice can be excited in the minds of some against any view, and even all the views held by that body of Christians called Advent Sabbathkeepers. This course has been and is being pursued on the subjects of the two-horned beast, sanctuary, time to commence the Sabbath, and period of the establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth. It should be here understood that all these views as held by the body of Sabbathkeepers, were brought out from the Scriptures before Mrs. White had any view in regard to them. These sentiments are founded upon the Scriptures as their only basis."

As to the relation of the Testimonies to the Bible, Uriah Smith, in an editorial in the *Review and Herald* of October 18, 1887, made the following statement:

" 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' All gifts of the Spirit in the church, must be thus tested. Now it is evident that that which tests occupies a higher position than that which is tested by it. This, in one word, expresses our view of the relative position which the Bible and the visions sustain to each other. But when a manifestation accords with the Word, and gives every evidence that it is a genuine manifestation of the Spirit of God, we submit it to the objector himself to say how far we may regard it lightly or despise or transgress its teachings with impunity. For the past nineteen years this has stood as the exponent of the views of this people on this point."

In closing this phase of our discussion we quote an apt illustration employed by Elder Smith in a *Review and Herald* editorial entitled "Do We Discard the Bible by Endorsing the Visions?"

"Suppose we are about to start upon a voyage. The owner of the vessel gives us a book of directions, telling us that it contains instructions sufficient for our whole journey, and that if we will heed them, we shall reach in safety our port of destination. Setting sail we open our book to learn its contents. We find that its author lays down general principles to govern us in our voyage, and instructs us as far as practicable, touching the various contingencies that may arise, till the end; but he also tells us that the latter part of our journey will be especially perilous; that the features of the coast are ever changing by reason of quicksands and tempests; 'but for this part of the journey,' says he, 'I have provided you a pilot, who will meet you, and give you such directions as the surrounding circumstances and dangers may require; and to him you must give heed.'

"With these directions we reach the perilous time specified, and the pilot, according to promise, appears. But some of the crew, as he offers his services, rise up against him. 'We have the original book of directions,' say they, 'and that is enough for us. We stand upon that, and that alone; we want nothing of you.' Who now heed that original book of directions? those who reject the pilot, or those who receive him, as that book instructs them? Judge ye.

"But some, through lack of perception, or lack of principle, or the ebullitions of an unconquerable prejudice, one, or all combined, may meet us at this point like this: 'Then you would have us take Sister White as our pilot, would you?' It is to forestall any efforts in this direction, that this sentence is penned. We say no such thing. What we do say is distinctly this: that the gifts of the Spirit are given for our pilot through these perilous times, and wherever and in whomsoever we find genuine manifestations of these, we are bound to respect them, nor can we do otherwise without in so far rejecting the Word of God, which directs us to receive them. Who now stand upon the Bible, and the Bible alone?

"Let no one then be frightened at this false alarm. A moment's consideration will show who receive the Bible, and who do not. Whoever receives it fully, will receive the pilot according to its directions. We do not, then, discard, but obey, the Bible by endorsing the visions; while we should just so far reject and disobey it, as we should refuse to receive the provisions it has made for our comfort, edification, and perfection."—*Review and Herald, Jan. 13, 1863.*

CHAPTER 11

No Claim to Infallibility

IN the great plan of salvation and in the work of God in the earth, there is a union of the human with the divine. God, in His wisdom, has seen fit to connect with Himself poor, fallible humanity, in the carrying out of His divine purpose. As the most valuable gems and jewels are sometimes placed in comparatively worthless caskets, so the Infinite One has seen fit to express His divine will through instruments of clay. And He has chosen this plan regardless of the frailties and limitations of the human agency. These human instrumentalities have been fallible men and women; sometimes even children, as in the case of Samuel; they have been men and women, as was Elijah, of "like passions as we are." But in the choosing of such instruments the greater glory redounds to the High and Holy One.

THE UNION OF HUMAN AND DIVINE

The relation of man to this divine revelation was unique. While preserving his own individuality and expressing the divine revelation in his own style, he was yet under the direction of the Holy Spirit. This union of the human and the divine is beautifully expressed in these words:

"The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed

are all 'given by inspiration of God' (2 Tim. 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language.

"The ten commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine and not of human composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.' John 1:14.

"Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clear insight, discerns the underlying harmony.

"As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind—a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life.

"God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthern vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from

Heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God; and the obedient, believing child of God beholds in it the glory of a divine power, full of grace and truth."—*The Great Controversy, Introduction, pp. v-vii.*

The fallible human instruments dealt with great, infallible themes. Moses, although sinful by nature and fallible in judgment, was the instrument through whom God led Israel from bondage to liberty. He was their apostle, prophet, and lawgiver. The four evangelists, although compassed with human frailties and weakness of character, were the agents through whom God gave the blessed gospel of His Son to all mankind.

Human Limitations

Sometimes these human instruments are weak in their conception of divine truth. As stated by the apostle Peter, they must even search their own writings to learn the depth of the spiritual themes they have been inspired to deliver. (1 Peter 1:10-12.) The language they employ falls far short of their great theme, as is seen in the description which Ezekiel gives of the throne of God and of His glory and majesty; but the themes which these men dealt with were holy themes, mighty truths, presenting a plan of perfect salvation for lost mankind.

This plan of operation, however, has given occasion for the objector to bring against God and His work the accusation of inconsistency. The prophets of old had to meet this charge again and again in their work. Mrs. E. G. White had to meet it during the long years of her ministry.

Through all the years of her writings Mrs. White sought to edit and improve the published record of her messages in order that they might more clearly express

the thoughts given her of God. If experience proved that some statement in her writings caused misunderstanding or confusion, or was capable of being misconstrued, she clarified it by restatement or fuller expression, perhaps, or eliminated it altogether.

God and Heaven Alone Infallible

In an article entitled "Search the Scriptures," by Mrs. E. G. White, in the *Review and Herald* of July 26, 1892, we find the following statement:

"We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible. Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed. As long as we hold to our own ideas and opinions with determined persistency, we cannot have the unity for which Christ prayed."

In all her writings Mrs. White not only conscientiously endeavored to express clearly and forcefully the great spiritual truths which formed the major part of her writings, but she sought painstakingly for accuracy in the statement of facts. This was one of her motives when, in dealing with historical matter, she read from the best historians, and in some instances quoted from them statements that were in harmony with what had been revealed to her.

Her efforts at accuracy are well illustrated in the manner of writing a biography of her former experience, in 1860. At that time she brought out *Spiritual Gifts,* Volume II, in the preface of which she wrote:

"In preparing the following pages, I have labored under great disadvantages, as I have had to depend, in many instances, on memory, having kept no journal till within a few years. In several instances I have sent the manuscripts to friends who were present

when the circumstances related occurred, for their examination before they were put in print. I have taken great care, and have spent much time, in endeavoring to state the simple facts as correctly as possible.

"I have, however, been much assisted in arriving at dates by the many letters which I wrote to Brother S. Howland and family at Topsham, Maine. As they for the period of five years had the care of my Henry, I felt it my duty to write to them often, and give them my experience, my joys, trials, and victories. In many instances I have copied from these letters."

An appendix of sixteen pages was printed and bound in only four hundred copies. In this appendix Mrs. White makes this statement:

"A special request is made that if any find incorrect statements in this book, they will immediately inform me. The edition will be completed about the first of October; therefore send before that time."

Then there appeared several pages of letters from individuals, verifying Mrs. White's statements. Two of these letters, however, suggest slight corrections in some statements contained in the printed pages. One statement corroborates her account of an incident, with the exception of the name of the one administering baptism to a certain sister. This correction was accepted, as is seen by a later revision. The other correction related to the initials of a person mentioned.

If she were convinced of error in statement, she would have been the first and foremost to correct it. It was in this spirit that she quoted with hearty approval the statement of J. N. Andrews, who in his rejoicing over additional light that had come to the advent band, exclaimed, "I would exchange a thousand errors for one truth." This was the spirit of the true Bible student, which we today do well to cherish.

Information From Others

The apostle Paul in his ministry used information which came to him from others as a text for needed instruction to the church. Divisions had crept into the church at Corinth. Naturally, those who were jealous for the work of God reported this to the apostle. To this he refers in the following verses:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." 1 Cor. 1:10, 11.

The apostle again refers to this in the eleventh chapter of this epistle: "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it."

Against this spirit of division the apostle threw the whole weight of his influence. The church was not to be divided into warring camps, one saying, "I am of Paul"; and another, "I of Apollos"; another, "I of Cephas." But their faith was to be centered in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him their differences were to be harmonized. But even though Paul received his initial information as to the state of the church at Corinth from human testimony, we do not therefore question his call to the apostleship, nor do we discredit the inspiration of his letter to the Corinthians. It is evident that he was led by the Spirit in the reproof and counsel he gave to that church. And no more should we question the call of the messenger of the Lord to the work committed to her because of following a course involving the same principle.

The fact that a prophet may receive information from

a human source is not an evidence that a subsequent message from him regarding the matter is merely a human opinion. Situations of a similar character may have been previously presented, or in answer to prayer, the Lord may give to His chosen instrument a revelation to guide him in what he writes.

Referring again to the apostle Paul's experience, we quote from *Testimonies,* Volume V, pages 65, 66:

"Paul was an inspired apostle, yet the Lord did not reveal to him at all times just the condition of his people. Those who were interested in the prosperity of the church, and saw evils creeping in, presented the matter before him, and from the light which he had previously received he was prepared to judge of the true character of these developments. Because the Lord had not given him a new revelation for that special time, those who were really seeking light, did not cast his message aside as only a common letter. No, indeed. The Lord had shown him the difficulties and dangers which would arise in the churches, that when they should develop, he might know just how to treat them.

"He was set for the defense of the church. He was to watch for souls as one that must render account to God, and should he not take notice of the reports concerning their state of anarchy and division? Most assuredly; and the reproof he sent them was written just as much under the inspiration of the Spirit of God as were any of his epistles."

Fallible Men Chosen for Leadership

Neither the prophets nor the apostles were credited with infallibility. Indeed, the Divine Record shows that sometimes they made mistakes in giving expression to their judgment relative to important questions. But when these prophetic counselors erred in expression of their personal judgment, as in the experience of Nathan, they were forward to change that counsel as soon as they were convinced of error. Nathan advised David very

definitely that he should undertake the work of building a house for the Lord; but in a night vision God revealed to the prophet that his advice was not right, and sent him with a message to the king, telling him that he should only make preparation for the building, but that Solomon, his son, should erect the edifice. (See 1 Chron. 17:1-4, 11, 12.)

The apostle Peter, upon whom rested the power of the Spirit of God at Pentecost so that he, with others, spoke with new tongues, was still so blinded by preconceived opinions and steeped in Jewish prejudice that for some years after this he thought the gospel of Christ was only for the Jews. It was necessary for God to give him a vision of the great sheet let down from heaven before Peter was willing to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. And yet during this time he was God's chosen apostle. (See Acts 10.)

Paul and Peter were leading apostles, men moved by the Holy Spirit, and yet there was sharp difference of opinion between them. Peter visited the church at Antioch, made up largely of Gentile believers. At first he ate with the Gentiles and accorded to them full fellowship; but on the occasion of the visit of some from Jerusalem who still held to circumcision, Peter refrained from his former close fellowship with the Gentile believers. This led the apostle Paul to withstand "him to the face, because he was to be blamed." Gal. 2:11. Paul blamed him, not so much for the Jewish prejudice which still bore sway in his life, as for the fact that he dissembled. He acted a double part, shaping his course by the opinions of men, and not by the principles of the gospel. This failure appeared to be a vestige of the same weakness he had manifested in his denial of the Lord on the night of the

crucifixion. But this weakness in the apostle pertained to the human. He was fallible and even erring; yet, nevertheless, he was God's chosen apostle. And he was not set aside because of these mistakes. God still recognized him in the work to which he had been called, and a truly great service was rendered the cause of Christianity through his zealous effort.

The acknowledgment and recognition of human frailty in God's chosen instruments redounds to His glory. It is seen that human genius or wisdom has no power in the work accomplished or the objects achieved. God works in spite of the weaknesses of the human agent. He employs fallible, erring, and even sinful men in the working out of His purposes. No flesh can glory in His presence; the glory is Christ's alone.

Looking to God, Not Man

During the lifetime of the messenger of the Lord, many carried to her their individual problems. In personal interview or by correspondence some sought to know just what they should do in the details of their own personal experience, when they should themselves have sought divine guidance. To this class of inquirers the following very definite counsel was given:

"In the vision given me June 12, 1868, I was shown the danger of the people of God in looking to Brother and Sister White, and thinking that they must come to them with their burdens, and seek counsel of them. This ought not so to be. They are invited by their compassionate, loving Saviour, to come unto Him, when weary and heavy laden, and He will relieve them. In Him they will find rest. In taking their perplexities and trials to Jesus, they will find the promise in regard to them fulfilled. When in their distress they feel the relief which is found alone in Jesus, they obtain an experience which is of the highest value to them. Brother and Sister White are striving for purity of life, striving to bring forth fruit unto holiness; yet they are only erring mortals.

"Many come to us with the inquiry, Shall I do this? Shall I engage in that enterprise? Or, in regard to dress, Shall I wear this or that article? I answer them, You profess to be disciples of Christ. Study your Bibles. Read carefully and prayerfully the life of our dear Saviour when He dwelt among men upon the earth. Imitate His life, and you will not be found straying from the narrow path. We utterly refuse to be conscience for you. If we tell you just what to do, you will look to us to guide you, instead of going directly to Jesus for yourselves. Your experience will be founded in us. You must have an experience for yourselves, which shall be founded in God. Then can you stand amid the perils of the last days, and be purified and not consumed by the fire of affliction through which all the saints must pass in order to have the impurities removed from their character preparatory to receiving the finishing touch of immortality."—*Id., Vol. II, pp. 118, 119.*

The principle stated in this counsel is well worthy of study today. God never designed that any man, we care not what may be his position, should be conscience for another. He never designed that the leaders of the church should interpose themselves between God and His children. It is proper of course, always, that counsel should be given where needed. But in the determination of every question the seeker after help should be directed to the Word of God, and in prayer to its divine Author for a personal vision of his needs and for a conviction of duty as to his own course of conduct.

CHAPTER 12

Verbal Inspiration

ARE the writings of Mrs. White verbally inspired? Was she given the exact words in which her thoughts are expressed? She never made any such claim. Indeed, she states very positively that such was not the case. Nor did the pioneers in this movement ever believe or teach verbal inspiration for the writings of the messenger of the Lord.

Many of her writings were prepared under trying circumstances, some in the bustle and stir of railway travel, some in the midst of busy meetings, some under the handicap of physical suffering. In the early days of her ministry she had but little clerical assistance. Recognizing these circumstances attending the production of her early books, especially the *Testimonies for the Church,* the General Conference of 1883 gave consideration to the steps which should be taken in connection with their publication, to eliminate imperfections in grammatical construction and forms of expression. There was appointed at this General Conference session a committee on resolutions, consisting of Uriah Smith, J. N. Loughborough, E. W. Farnsworth, W. C. White, and O. A. Olsen, prominent leaders in the work of the church at that time, and men who since that date have held many prominent official positions in connection with this movement. This committee, in its report to the fourteenth meeting of the session, held November 20, 1883, made the following recommendations:

ACTIONS OF GENERAL CONFERENCE

"32. WHEREAS, Some of the bound volumes of the *Testimonies for the Church* are out of print, so that full sets cannot be obtained at the office; and,

"WHEREAS, There is a constant and urgent call for the reprinting of these volumes; therefore,

"*Resolved,* That we recommend their republication in such a form as to make four volumes of seven or eight hundred pages each.

"33. WHEREAS, Many of these testimonies were written under the most unfavorable circumstances, the writer being too heavily pressed with anxiety and labor to devote critical thought to the grammatical perfection of the writings, and they were printed in such haste as to allow these imprefections to pass uncorrected; and,

"WHEREAS, We believe the light given by God to His servants is by the enlightening of the mind, thus imparting the thoughts, and not (except in rare cases) the very words in which the ideas should be expressed; therefore,

"*Resolved,* That in the republication of these volumes, such verbal changes be made as to remove the above-named imperfections, as far as possible without in any measure changing the thought."—*Review and Herald, Nov. 27, 1883.*

These recommendations were considered by the delegates to this General Conference, and were unanimously adopted. Later in the session a committee on republication of the *Testimonies* was appointed. The personnel of this committee is named in the following statement, which we quote from the Year Book of 1884, page 44:

"A committee of five to take charge of the republication of the *Testimonies* provided for in the thirty-fourth resolution, was announced as follows, the chair having been empowered to select four persons besides himself for this purpose: W. C. White, Uriah Smith, J. H. Waggoner, S. N. Haskell, Geo. I. Butler."

This committee, of course, in carrying out the instructions of the conference, worked in close co-operation with Mrs. E. G. White. That these recommendations fully met her mind we may well believe, because this purpose

possessed her through all the years, namely, to place her writings in the best possible form in which they would most clearly express the thoughts given her of the Lord.

Idea or Word Inspiration

The view of inspiration in the resolutions of the General Conference has been the teaching of the church, so far as we know, throughout its history. This is well expressed by Uriah Smith, for more than forty years on the editorial staff of the *Review and Herald,* in its issue of March 13, 1888:

"The questioner says, 'Is not a word a sign of an idea? and how then can an idea be inspired, and the signs that transfer the idea from one mind to another be uninspired?'

"*Answer.*—If there was but one word by which an idea could be expressed, this would be so; but when there are perhaps a hundred ways of expressing the same idea, the case becomes very different. Of course, if the Holy Spirit should give a person words to write, he would be obliged to use those very words, without change; but when simply a scene or view is presented before a person, and no language is given, he would be at liberty to describe it in his own words, as might seem to him best to express the truth in the case. And if, having written it out once, a better way of expressing it should occur to him, it would be perfectly legitimate for him to scratch out all he had written and write it over again, keeping strictly to the ideas and facts which had been shown him; and in the second writing there would be the divinely communicated idea just as much as in the first, while in neither case could it be said that the words employed were dictated by the Holy Spirit, but were left to the judgment of the individual himself.

"Much of what the prophets have written in the Scriptures are words spoken directly by the Lord, and are not their own words. In these cases, of course, the words are inspired. In Sister White's writings she often records words spoken by angels. Such words, of course, she gives as she hears them, and has no discretionary power in regard to the terms to be used, or the construction to be followed. These are not *her* words, and are not to be changed.

But much of what the penmen of the Bible have said they might have written in different phraseology, and the truths uttered have been inspired truths to the same extent that they are now. . . .

"When John on the Isle of Patmos heard the voice of majesty and love addressing him, as he was wrapped in the Spirit, the voice said unto him, 'What thou *seest* write,' not, 'Write the *words* that I shall give thee.' Rev. 1:11. And when John says, in verse 12, 'And I turned to see the voice that spake with me,' he might have said, 'And I turned to see who was speaking with me,' and this would have been just as much inspiration as the former. These examples will illustrate what we mean by saying that the words may not be inspired, while at the same time the ideas, the facts, the truths, which those words convey, may be divinely communicated.

"The same method of reasoning which opposers adopt in regard to Sister White when they ask if her amanuenses, and the historians she quotes, were inspired too, the infidel uses against the Word of God itself. We call our English Bible an inspired book; but the English is a translation from the original Hebrew. Other translations have been made, and the translators differ much in the phraseology of their translations; whereupon the infidel asks, Are these translators all inspired, too? And he asks it on just as good ground, and with just as much reason, as those referred to above ask the same question with reference to the writings of Sister White."

Mrs. White's Own Statement

Mrs. White's own views were in full accord with this statement from the early editor of the *Review and Herald.* In the *Review and Herald* of October 8, 1867, Mrs. White says this regarding verbal inspiration:

"Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always inclose in marks of quotation."

Thirty-nine years later, in the *Review and Herald* of August 30, 1906, Mrs. White makes this further statement regarding her writings. She is replying to a letter

she had received from a brother who was concerned regarding the inspiration of her Testimonies:

"In your letter, you speak of your early training to have implicit faith in the Testimonies, and say, 'I was led to conclude and most firmly believe that *every* word that you ever spoke in public or private, that every letter you wrote under *any* and *all* circumstances, was as inspired as the ten commandments.'

"My brother, you have studied my writings diligently, and you have never found that I have made any such claims. Neither will you find that the pioneers in our cause have made such claims."

Human Counsel Not Ignored

The messenger of the Lord recognized that while God spoke to her directly in vision and dream, it was her privilege also to avail herself of the help that would come through counsel with her associates. God has set in His church various gifts, such as apostles, prophets, teachers, etc. The strength of His work in the earth rests largely upon the harmonious co-operation of His servants, upon whom these various gifts are bestowed. While the prophet may instruct the apostle, at the same time the prophet in His work may avail himself of the wisdom and judgment bestowed upon the apostle.

Notwithstanding the abundance of Paul's revelations, he availed himself of the combined wisdom represented by the various gifts and talents which God had placed in the church. He had learned this lesson in the very beginning of his Christian ministry. On his way to Damascus to engage in the work of persecuting the Christian church, he was warned by a voice from heaven of the evil of his course, and that same voice called him to the apostleship to the Gentiles. Then he was sent to a humble disciple, Ananias, in Damascus, for further light and instruction.

It was in recognition of this principle that Mrs. White oftentimes consulted with others as to the manner in which she should send out her messages to the church. She availed herself of the judgment with which God had endowed her husband and other leaders in the work, to learn more perfectly her duty and the course she should pursue in presenting the messages to others. This is indicated in the following statement from her pen:

"While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. . . . The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed, or for the printer."

"It requires much wisdom and sound judgment, quickened by the Spirit of God, to know the proper time and manner to present the instruction that has been given."

"In the early days of this cause, if some of the leading brethren were present when messages from the Lord were given, we would consult with them as to the best manner of bringing the instruction before the people. Sometimes it was decided that certain portions would better not be read before a congregation. Sometimes those whose course was reproved would request that the matters pointing out their wrongs and dangers should be read before others, that they, too, might be benefited."

"Faithfully I endeavor to write out that which is given me from time to time by the divine Counselor. Some portions of that which I write are sent out immediately to meet the present necessities of the work. Other portions are held until the development of circumstances makes it evident to me that the time has come for their use."—*E. G. White, The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church (Pacific Press, 1906), pp. 4-6.*

CHAPTER 13

Suppression and the Shut Door

PERHAPS one of the most common charges brought against the work of Mrs. E. G. White is that of suppression, the charge that in the later editions of Mrs. White's writings there have been omissions of thoughts and sentences and even paragraphs. While we freely and frankly admit that in the revisions of her books, Mrs. White sometimes expressed her thoughts in different language and sometimes added or omitted altogether phrases and sentences and even paragraphs, yet we deny the charge of suppression, which carries with it the implication of the purpose to deceive. We shall give illustrations of such revisions later. In our judgment such revisions in no way vitiate or weaken in any degree this gift in the church. Mrs. White never claimed perfect understanding of all that was given her of God, and was far from claiming perfection or inerrancy of expression in communicating to others that which was revealed to her. There were given to her visions and dreams and revelations; there were brought before her mind pictures of conditions that existed, of scenes in this earth and in heaven. In the fear of God she conscientiously described these revelations, but was sometimes misunderstood and even misinterpreted.

In later editions she endeavored in certain cases to improve these descriptions, and in doing so made changes in some expressions and omitted others. Every such

change was made by her or by her personal authorization. She is to be honored for this earnest effort on her part to express in the best possible form the instruction which she had received. If the authors of ordinary books seek to do this, how much more fitting it is that the one acting as the Lord's messenger should endeavor to express as clearly, concisely, and accurately as possible the instruction she received. She declared, as stated in a preceding chapter, that the words she employed in describing what she had seen were her own. If, therefore, in her expression of the truth of God, she felt that words other than those she first used could better express the message she had to give, surely it was not only her privilege but her duty to make such changes as her judgment dictated.

Uriah Smith, writing in 1887 concerning this charge of suppression of portions of the early visions, likewise advanced by critics in his day, said:

"It is an interesting point to inquire when this work [of suppression] was done, and under what circumstances, and what methods were adopted to accomplish it. On the first day of May, 1853, we entered upon a connection with the Review office, which, with the exception of two brief intervals, has continued to the present time. During all these thirty-four years, therefore, we speak from personal knowledge when we say that there has not been the first suggestion, or the least indication of any desire or intention, to conceal or modify or in the least degree change anything revealed through Sister White in vision."—*Review and Herald, Battle Creek, Mich., July 19, 1887, p. 456.*

The earliest publications from Mrs. White's pen may be found in printed form today. When the editions of these earlier volumes were exhausted, they were allowed to go out of print because the writer had additional matter which she wished to present to the church, and these later editions contain the revisions of which we have already

spoken. Even as this volume goes to press, arrangements are being made for issuance of facsimile reproductions of these early E. G. White books that all who wish copies may have them.

Mrs. White's Own Explanation

We are pleased to present in this connection a statement prepared by Mrs. E. G. White. This statement has never appeared in print before, and we believe it will be read with interest. It is in perfect accord with preceding observations:

"My attention has recently been called to a sixteen-page pamphlet published by ————, of Marion, Iowa, entitled, 'Comparison of the Early Writings of Mrs. White With Later Publications.' The writer states that portions of my earlier visions, as first printed, have been suppressed in the work recently published under the title, *Early Writings of Mrs. E. G. White,* and he conjectures as a reason for such suppression that these passages teach doctrines now repudiated by us as a people.

"He also charges us with willful deception in representing *Early Writings* as a complete republication of my earliest views, with only verbal changes from the original work.

"Before I notice separately the passages which are said to have been omitted, it is proper that several facts be stated. When my earliest views were first published in pamphlet form, the edition was small, and was soon sold. This was in a few years followed by a larger book, *The Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. E. G. White,* printed in 1851, and containing much additional matter.

"In our frequent change of location in the earlier history of the publishing work, and then in almost incessant travel as I have labored from Maine to Texas, from Michigan to California,—and I have crossed the plains no less than seventeen times,—I lost all trace of the first published works. When it was decided to publish *Early Writings* at Oakland last fall, we were obliged to send to Michigan to borrow a copy of *Experience and Views.* And in doing this we supposed that we had obtained an exact copy of the earliest visions as first published. This we reprinted, as stated in the preface to *Early Writings,* with only verbal changes from the original work.

"And here I will pause to state that any of our people having in their possession a copy of any or all of my first views, as published prior to 1851, will do me a great favor if they will send them to me without delay. I promise to return the same as soon as a copy can be produced.

"So far from desiring to withhold anything that I have ever published, I would feel great satisfaction in giving to the public every line of my writings that has ever been printed.

"Testimonies Garbled by Eli Curtis

"There is another fact that should be stated here. I am not responsible for all that has been printed as coming from me. About the time that my earliest visions were first published, several articles did appear purporting to have been written by me, and to relate what the Lord had shown me, but sanctioning doctrines which I did not believe. These were published in a paper edited by a Mr. Curtis. Of the name of the paper I am not certain. In the years of care and labor that have passed since then, some of these less important particulars have been forgotten, but the main points are still distinct in my mind.

"This man took articles that came from my pen, and wholly transformed and distorted them, picking out a sentence here and there, without giving the connection, and then, after inserting his own ideas, he attached my name to them as if they came direct from me.

"On seeing these articles, we wrote to him, expressing our surprise and disapprobation, and forbidding him thus to misconstrue my testimonies. He answered that he should publish what he pleased, that he knew the visions ought to say what he had published, and that if I had written them as the Lord gave them to me, they would have said these things. He asserted that if the visions had been given for the benefit of the church, he had a right to use them as he pleased.

"Some of these sheets may still be in existence, and may be brought forward as coming from me, but I am not responsible for them. The articles given in *Early Writings* did pass under my eye; and as the edition of *Experience and Views* published in 1851

was the earliest which we possessed, and as we had no knowledge of anything additional in papers or pamphlets of earlier date, I am not responsible for the omissions which are said to exist.

"The First Omission

"The first quotation mentioned by ———— is from a pamphlet of twenty-four pages published in 1847, entitled, 'A Word to the Little Flock.' Here are the lines omitted in *Experience and Views:*

" 'It was just as impossible for them [those that gave up their faith in the '44 movement] to get on the path again and go to the city, as all the wicked world which God had rejected. They fell all the way along the path one after another.'

"I will give the context, that the full force of the expressions may be clearly seen:

" 'While praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell on me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the advent people in the world, but could not find them—when a voice said to me, "Look again, and look a little higher." At this I raised my eyes and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the first end of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry. This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet so they might not stumble. And if they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and they said the city was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a glorious light which waved over the advent band, and they shouted, Hallelujah! Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God, that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and got their eyes off the mark and lost sight of Jesus, and fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below.'

"Now follows the passage said to be in the original work, but not found in *Experience and Views* nor in *Early Writings:*

" 'It was just as impossible for them [those that gave up their faith in the '44 movement] to get on the path again and go to the city, as all the wicked world which God had rejected. They fell all the way along the path one after another.'

"The 'Shut Door' Defined

"It is claimed that these expressions prove the shut-door doctrine, and that this is the reason of their omission in later editions. But in fact they teach only that which has been and is still held by us as a people, as I shall show.

"For a time after the disappointment in 1844, I did hold, in common with the advent body, that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world. This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error, and enabled us to see the true position.

"I am still a believer in the shut-door theory, but not in the sense in which we at first employed the term or in which it is employed by my opponents.

"There was a shut door in Noah's day. There was at that time a withdrawal of the Spirit of God from the sinful race that perished in the waters of the flood. God Himself gave the shut-door message to Noah:

" 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.'

"There was a shut door in the days of Abraham. Mercy ceased to plead with the inhabitants of Sodom, and all but Lot, with his wife and two daughters, were consumed by the fire sent down from heaven.

"There was a shut door in Christ's day. The Son of God declared to the unbelieving Jews of that generation, 'Your house is left unto you desolate.'

"Looking down the stream of time to the last days, the same infinite power proclaimed through John:

" 'These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.'

"I was shown in vision, and I still believe, that there was a shut door in 1844. All who saw the light of the first and second angels' messages and rejected that light, were left in darkness. And

those who accepted it and received the Holy Spirit which attended the proclamation of the message from heaven, and who, afterward renounced their faith and pronounced their experience a delusion, thereby rejected the Spirit of God, and it no longer pleaded with them.

"Those who did not see the light, had not the guilt of its rejection. It was only the class who had despised the light from heaven that the Spirit of God could not reach. And this class included, as I have stated, both those who refused to accept the message when it was presented to them, and also those who, having received it, afterward renounced their faith. These might have a form of godliness, and profess to be followers of Christ; but having no living connection with God, they would be taken captive by the delusions of Satan. These two classes are brought to view in the vision,—those who declared the light which they had followed, a delusion, and the wicked of the world who, having rejected the light, had been rejected of God. No reference is made to those who had not seen the light, and therefore were not guilty of its rejection.

"In order to prove that I believed and taught the shut-door doctrine, Mr. ———— gives a quotation from the *Review* of June 11, 1861, signed by nine of our prominent members. The quotation reads as follows:

" 'Our views of the work before us were then mostly vague and indefinite, some still retaining the idea adopted by the body of advent believers in 1844, with William Miller at their head, that our work for "the world" was finished, and that the message was confined to those of the original advent faith. So firmly was this believed that one of our number was nearly refused the message, the individual presenting it having doubts of the possibility of his salvation because he was not in "the '44 move." '

"To this I need only to add, that in the same meeting in which it was urged that the message could not be given to this brother, a testimony was given me through vision to encourage him to hope in God and to give his heart fully to Jesus, which he did then and there.

"An Unreasonable Conjecture

"In another passage from the book *A Word to the Little Flock,* I speak of scenes upon the new earth, and state that I there saw holy men of old, 'Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, Daniel and many

like them.' Because I speak of having seen these men, our opponents *conjecture* that I then believed in the immortality of the soul and that having since changed my views upon this point, I found it necessary to suppress that passage. They are as near the truth here as in other conjectures.

"In the year 1844 I accepted the doctrine we now hold, concerning the nonimmortality of the soul, as may be seen by reference to *Life Sketches,* pp. 170, 171 [1880 ed. See also 1915 ed. p. 49; *Testimonies,* Vol. I, pp. 39, 40], and I have never, by voice or pen, advocated any other. Had we suppressed this passage on account of its teaching the immortality of the soul, we would have found it necessary to suppress other passages.

"In relating my first vision, page 13 of *Early Writings* [1882 ed., present edition, p. 17], I speak of having seen brethren who had but a short time previous fallen asleep in Jesus, and on page 14 [present ed., pp. 18, 19] I state that I was shown a great company who had suffered martyrdom for their faith.

"The immortality of the soul is no more taught in the 'suppressed' passage than in the two last cited.

"The fact in the case is, that in these visions I was carried forward to the time when the resurrected saints shall be gathered into the kingdom of God. In the same manner the judgment, the second coming of Christ, the establishment of the saints upon the new earth have been presented before me. Does any one suppose that these scenes have yet transpired? My adversaries show the spirit by which they are actuated in thus accusing me of deception on the strength of a mere 'conjecture.'

"A Misquotation

"In this quotation are also found the words, 'I saw two long golden rods on which hung silver wires, and on the wires were glorious grapes.'

"My opponents ridicule 'that weak and childish expression of glorious grapes growing on silver wires, and these wires attached to golden rods.'

"What motive impelled the writer of the above to misstate my words? I do not state that grapes were *growing* on silver wires. That which I beheld is described as it appeared to me. It is not to be supposed that grapes were attached to silver wires or golden rods,

but that such was the appearance presented. Similar expressions are daily employed by every person in ordinary conversation. When we speak of golden fruit, we are not understood as declaring that the fruit is composed of that precious metal, but simply that it has the appearance of gold. The same rule applied to my words removes all excuse for misapprehension.

"The Seal of God

"Another 'suppression' reads as follows:

" 'Well, bless the Lord, brethren and sisters, it is an extra meeting for those that have the seal of the living God.'

"There is nothing in this that we do not still hold. Reference to our published works will show our belief that the living righteous will receive the seal of God prior to the close of probation; also that these will enjoy special honors in the kingdom of God.

"Renouncing the Sabbath

"The following passage is said to be omitted from the vision related on pages 25-28 [pp. 32-35, present ed.] of *Early Writings:*

" 'And if one believed, and kept the Sabbath, and received the blessing attending it, and then gave it up, and broke the holy commandment, they would shut the gates of the Holy City against themselves, as sure as there was a God that rules in heaven above.'

"Those who have clearly seen and fully accepted the truth upon the fourth commandment, and have received the blessing attending obedience, but have since renounced their faith, and dared to violate the law of God, will find, if they persist in this path of disobedience, the gates of the city of God closed against them.

" 'Time Nearly Finished'

"A statement published in 1851 in *Experience and Views,* and found on page 49 [p. 58, present ed.] of *Early Writings* is quoted as proving my testimonies false:

" 'I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the most holy place was nearly finished, and that time can last but a very little longer.'

"As the subject was presented before me, the period of Christ's ministration seemed almost accomplished. Am I accused of falsehood because time has continued longer than my testimony seemed to

indicate? How is it with the testimonies of Christ and His disciples? Were they deceived?

"Paul writes to the Corinthians:

" 'But this I say, brethren, *the time is short:* it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none: and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not.'

"Again, in his epistle to the Romans, he says:

" 'The night is far spent, the day is *at hand:* let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.'

"And from Patmos, Christ speaks to us by the beloved John:

" 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the *time is at hand.*' 'The Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must *shortly* be done. Behold, I come *quickly;* blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.'

"The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me. It is true that time has continued longer than we expected in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear as soon as we hoped. But has the word of the Lord failed? Never! It should be remembered that the promises and threatenings of God are alike conditional.

"God had committed to His people a work to be accomplished on earth. The third angel's message was to be given, the minds of believers were to be directed to the heavenly sanctuary, where Christ had entered to make atonement for His people. The Sabbath reform was to be carried forward. The breach in the law of God must be made up. The message must be proclaimed with a loud voice, that all the inhabitants of earth might receive the warning. The people of God must purify their souls through obedience to the truth, and be prepared to stand without fault before Him at His coming.

"Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith, and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have

seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward.

"But in the period of doubt and uncertainty that followed the disappointment, many of the advent believers yielded their faith. Dissensions and divisions came in. The majority opposed with voice and pen the few who, following in the providence of God, received the Sabbath reform and began to proclaim the third angel's message. Many who should have devoted their time and talents to the one purpose of sounding warning to the world, were absorbed in opposing the Sabbath truth, and in turn, the labor of its advocates was necessarily spent in answering these opponents and defending the truth. Thus the work was hindered, and the world was left in darkness. Had the whole Adventist body united upon the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, how widely different would have been our history!

"It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in 'because of unbelief.' Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfill His covenant with them.

"For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.

"There are two other passages said to be found in my first book, but not given in my later writings. Concerning these I shall only say, when I can obtain a book containing them, so that I can be assured of the correctness of the quotations and can see for myself their connection, I shall be prepared to speak understandingly in regard to them.

"Last-Day Scoffers

"From the beginning of my work, I have been pursued by hatred, reproach, and falsehood. Base imputations and slanderous reports have been greedily gathered up and widely circulated by the rebellious, the formalist, and the fanatic. There are ministers of the so-called orthodox churches traveling from place to place to war against Seventh-day Adventists, and they make Mrs. White their textbook. The scoffers of the last days are led on by these ministers professing to be God's watchmen.

"The unbelieving world, the ministers of the fallen churches, and the First Day Adventists are united in the work of assailing Mrs. White. This warfare has been kept up for nearly forty years, but I have not felt at liberty even to notice their vile speeches, reproaches, and insinuations. And I would not now depart from this custom, were it not that some honest souls may be misled by the enemies of the truth who are so exultantly declaring me a deceiver. In the hope of helping the minds of the honest, I make the statements that I do.

"I do not expect to reach those who, having seen the light of truth, refuse to heed it, those who have given themselves up to prejudice, and intrenched their souls in unbelief.

"Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, He who was equal with God, was in the world thirty-three years, and yet there were but few who acknowledged His divine character. And can I, who am so weak, so unworthy, a frail creature of humanity, expect greater success than was enjoyed by the Saviour of the world?

"When I first gave myself to this work, to go when God should bid me, to speak the words which He should give me for the people, I knew that I should receive opposition, reproach, persecution. I have not been disappointed. Had I depended on human applause, I would long ago have become discouraged. But I looked to Jesus, and saw that He who was without a fault was assailed by slanderous tongues. Those who made high pretensions to godliness followed as spies upon the Saviour's course, and made every exertion in their power to hedge up His way. But although He was all-powerful, He did not visit His adversaries as their sins deserved. He might have launched forth against them the bolts of His vengeance, but He did not. He administered scathing rebukes for their hypocrisy

and corruption, and when His message was rejected and His life threatened, He quietly passed to another place to speak the words of life. I have tried, in my weakness, to follow the example of my Saviour.

"The Enmity Against Christ

"How eagerly the Pharisees sought to prove Christ a deceiver! How they watched His every word, seeking to misrepresent and misinterpret all His sayings! Pride and prejudice and passion closed every avenue of the soul against the testimony of the Son of God. When He plainly rebuked their iniquity and declared that their works proved them to be the children of Satan, they angrily flung back the accusation, saying, 'Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?'

"All the arguments urged against Christ were founded in falsehood. So was it in the case of Stephen, and of Paul. But the weakest and most unreliable statements made on the wrong side had an influence, because there were so many whose hearts were unsanctified, who desired those statements to be true. Such are ever eager to fasten upon any supposed error or mistake in those who speak to them the unpalatable truth.

"It should not surprise us when evil conjectures are greedily seized upon as undoubted facts by those who have an appetite for falsehood. The opposers of Christ were again and again confounded and put to silence by the wisdom of His words; yet they still eagerly listened to every rumor, and found some pretext to ply Him again with opposing questions. They were determined not to abandon their purpose. They well knew that if Jesus should continue His work, many would believe on Him, and the scribes and Pharisees would lose their power with the people. Hence they were ready to stoop to any base or contemptible measure to accomplish their malicious intentions against Him. They hated the Herodians, yet they joined these inveterate enemies in order to invent some plan to rid the earth of Christ.

"Such was the spirit with which the Son of God was met by those whom He came to save. Can any who are seeking to obey God, and to bear to the world the message of His truth, expect a more favorable reception than was granted Christ?

"I have no ill will toward those who are seeking to make of

none effect the message which God has given to reprove, warn, and encourage His people. But as the ambassador of Christ, I must stand in defense of the truth. Who are those that so zealously array themselves against me? Are they the pure and holy children of faith? Have they been born again? Are they partakers of the divine nature? Do they love Jesus, and manifest His spirit of meekness and humility? 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Do they resemble the early disciples, or those cunning scribes and Pharisees who were constantly watching to entrap Christ in His words? Notice the sharp practice of those ancient opposers of the faith—how lawyers, priests, scribes, and rulers combined to find something against Him who was the light of the world.

"And why were they so intent upon condemning Christ? They did not love His doctrines and precepts, and they were displeased as they saw the attention of the people turned to Him and away from their former leaders.

"Human nature is human nature still. Let not those who seek to hedge up my way and destroy the influence of my words, deceive themselves with the belief that they are doing God service. They are serving another master, and they will be rewarded according to their work.

"Rebellion will exist as long as Satan exists. Those who are actuated by his spirit will not discern the Spirit of God or listen to its voice until the mandate shall go forth, 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' Rev. 22:11. I expect to encounter the malice of those who despise the light which God has been pleased to give me.

"It is God's plan to give sufficient evidence of the divine character of His work to convince all who honestly desire to know the truth. But He never removes all opportunity for doubt. All who desire to question and cavil will find occasion. I pity those who have set their feet in the path of doubt and unbelief. I would gladly help them if I could, but the experience of the past gives me little hope that they will ever come to the light. No amount of evidence will convince men of the truth so long as they are unwilling to yield their pride, subdue their carnal nature, and become learners in the school of Christ.

"Self-will and pride of opinion lead many to reject the light from heaven. They cling to pet ideas, fanciful interpretations of Scripture, and dangerous heresies; and if a testimony is borne to correct these errors, they will, like many in Christ's day, go away displeased.

"It matters not how blameless the character and life of those who speak to the people the words of God; this procures for them no credit. And why? Because they tell the people the truth. This, brethren, is my offense. But if a false report is circulated, if by some inference or conjecture an imputation is cast upon the character of Christ's ambassador, with what absurd credulity is it received! How many are ready to magnify and spread the slander! Such are revealing their real character. 'He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.' John 8:47.

"Calumny and reproach will be the recompense of those who stand for the truth as it is in Jesus. 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' 2 Tim. 3:12. Those who bear a plain testimony against sin will as surely be hated as was the Master who gave them this work to do in His name. Like Christ, they will be called the enemies of the church and of religion; and the more earnest and true their efforts to honor God, the more bitter will be the enmity of the ungodly and hypocritical. But we should not be discouraged when thus treated.

"We may be called 'weak and foolish,' enthusiastic, even insane. It may be said of us as it was of Christ, 'He hath a devil.' But the work which the Master has given us to do is our work still. We must direct minds to Jesus, not seeking praise or honor of men, but committing ourselves to Him who judgeth righteously. He knows how to help those who, while following in His steps, suffer in a limited degree the reproach He bore. He was tempted in all points like as we are, that He might know how to succor those who should be tempted.

"Whatever wrong construction may be placed upon my testimony by those who profess righteousness yet know not God, I shall in humility go forward with my work. I will speak the words which God gives me to speak in encouragement, reproof, and warning. There remains but a little remnant of my life on earth. The work that my Father hath given me, I will, by His grace, perform

with fidelity, knowing that all my deeds must pass the scrutiny of Jehovah."—*Ellen G. White MS. 4, 1883.*

The foregoing statement from Mrs. E. G. White is in full harmony with the statement made in the facsimile of her letter which was published in the *Review and Herald* of June 14, 1932. We reprint this letter, both in type and in facsimile form:

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., Aug. 24, 1874.

DEAR BRO. LOUGHBOROUGH:

I hereby testify in the fear of God that the charges of Miles Grant, of Mrs. Burdick, and others published in the *Crisis* is not true. The statements in reference to my course in forty-four is false.

With my brethren and sisters, after the time passed in forty-four I did believe no more sinners would be converted. But I never had a vision that no more sinners would be converted. And am clear and free to state no one has ever heard me say or has read from my pen statements which will justify them in the charges they have made against me upon this point.

It was on my first journey east to relate my visions that the precious light in regard to the heavenly sanctuary was opened before me and I was shown the open and shut door. We believed that the Lord was soon to come in the clouds of heaven. I was shown that there was a great work to be done in the world for those who had not had the light and rejected it. Our brethren could not understand this with our faith in the immediate appearing of Christ. Some accused me of saying my Lord delayeth His coming, especially the fanatical ones. I saw that in '44 God had opened a door and no man could shut it, and shut a door and no man could open it. Those who rejected the light which was brought to the world by the message of the second angel went into darkness, and how great was that darkness.

I never have stated or written that the world was doomed or damned. I never have under any circumstances used this language to any one, however sinful. I have ever had messages of reproof for those who used these harsh expressions.—*Ellen G. White, Letter 2, 1874.*

Facsimile of Mrs. White's Letter

Battle Creek Mich. Aug 24 1874

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and shut door. We believed that the Lord was soon to come in the clouds of heaven. I was shown that there was a great work to be done in for those who had not had the light and rejected it the world. Our brethren could not understand this with our faith in the ~~can~~ immediate appearing of Christ. Some accused me of saying my Lord delayeth his coming especially the faint-hearted ones. I saw that in 44 God had ~~shut~~ opened a door and no man could shut it and ~~opened~~ shut a door and no man could open it. Those who ~~refused to~~ rejected the light which was brought to the world by the Message of the Second angel went into darkness and ~~lost~~ then how great was that darkness.

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(This letter, written by Mrs. E. G. White to Elder J. N. Loughborough, August 24, 1874, has been photographed under my supervision by the Pacific Press Publishing Association.)

November 17, 1931 E. K. Jones, Manager.

Other Questions

We have been asked to explain at various times how we harmonize the statement of Mrs. White that just before Christ's coming the day and hour of that coming would be declared from heaven, with the statement of Christ found in Mark 13:32. I believe these two statements can be harmonized without difficulty.

In Mark 13:32 Christ declares, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Christ here made a statement that was then a fact, and would continue to be a fact down through and to the very close of the Christian dispensation. To the world there would be no announcement of the coming of the Lord, and no such announcement will be made even to the church during the probationary period; for such an announcement would defeat the very purpose of the gospel, leading men to turn to the Lord through fear or because of selfish considerations, and not from a principle of right. But after there has been called out of all nations a people for His name, after Christ has ceased to minister in the sanctuary above, and the case of every one, living and dead, has been irrevocably fixed and the reward determined, then, just before Christ is to appear in the clouds of heaven, the Father will proclaim the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The statement in *The Great Controversy* reads as follows:

"The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. Like peals of loudest thunder, His words roll through the earth. The Israel of God stand listening, with their eyes fixed upward. Their countenances are lighted up with His glory, and shine as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked cannot look upon them. And when the blessing is pronounced on those who have honored God by keeping His Sabbath holy, there is a mighty shout of victory.

"Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour, and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man."—*Page 640, ed. 1893.*

Commenting on this statement Mrs. White wrote on August 11, 1888:

"They [these statements referred to above] contain all that I have ever been shown in regard to the definite time of the Lord's coming. I have not the slightest knowledge as to the time spoken by the voice of God. I heard the hour proclaimed, but had no remembrance of that hour after I came out of vision.

"Scenes of such thrilling, solemn interest passed before me as no language is adequate to describe. It was all a living reality to me, for close upon this scene appeared the great white cloud, upon which was seated the Son of man."—*E. G. White Letter 38, 1888.*

The Conference of 1856

Frequently we are referred to the Battle Creek conference meeting, held in 1856, and are asked how many who attended that meeting are now living.

The statement to which reference is here made is as follows:

"I was shown the company present at the conference. Said the angel, 'Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus.' "—*Testimonies, Vol. I, pp. 131, 132.*

This statement from the angel was made by Mrs. E. G. White at an early morning meeting in Battle Creek, Michigan, following a conference session, May 27, 28, 1856, which had just closed in that city. At the early morning meeting where the statement was made about one hundred persons were present. At the conference,

which had just closed many more were present. We do not have the exact number, but it was a company so large that it could not be accommodated in the usual house of worship. Regarding this conference, Elder James White wrote in the *Review* of June 12, 1856:

"The attendance from this State was not very large, owing, no doubt, to the meeting being held in the time of planting, this backward season; still, with those from other States, there were more Sabbathkeepers present Sabbath morning than could be seated in the 'House of Prayer,' and it became necessary to adjourn to the tent before the hour for preaching."

Mrs. White refers to the company present at the conference, and not to the company present at the early morning meeting. Evidently there were three or four hundred people present at the conference meeting. Many years after the conference meeting was held, two brethren attempted to compile a list of the names of those who were present. It was impossible for anyone at this late date to make an accurate list of those who were there. It was made up of those who were supposed to be there. No one living today knows how many of those present have died or how many are still living. Hence it is impossible to base any calculations as to the coming of the Lord upon this statement made by Mrs. E. G. White.

There is another angle to this question, which may well be considered in this connection. Some of the divine predictions as to the future were based on conditions contingent upon the course taken by those to whom the predictions were addressed. This principle is stated in the following Scripture:

"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have

pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in My sight, that it obey not My voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." Jer. 18:7-10.

An illustration of this principle was seen in the experience of Nineveh. Jonah was sent to Nineveh with a message that within forty days that wicked city would be destroyed. His message brought repentance, and the threatened judgment was withheld. This same principle was illustrated in the prophecy regarding the city of Jerusalem. Through Jeremiah, the Lord instructed Israel of old that if they would observe the Sabbath and be obedient to His requirements, Jerusalem would remain forever. (Jer. 17:24, 25.) But if they refused to do this then their capital city would be destroyed. (Verses 26 and 27.) And this destruction was accomplished by Nebuchadnezzar in fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah. (2 Chron. 36:17-21.)

We are told by the messenger of the Lord that if the remnant church had met God's plan and purpose in doing the work that He had appointed them, that the day of the Lord would have come ere this and the faithful would have been gathered into the kingdom. Read *Testimonies,* Volume II, page 194; Volume VI, page 450. This affords a reasonable explanation of the prediction made in 1856 regarding the future of those who listened to the messenger of the Lord.

CHAPTER 14

Changes in Revision

THROUGH the years, in the various revisions of the books by Mrs. E. G. White, and in the publication of new editions, there have been made various changes. We cannot attempt to consider these in detail. We will consider, however, the revision made in one of her most prominent books, namely, *The Great Controversy*. This revision affords an excellent illustration of the minor changes which have been made in others of her publications. The revision of *The Great Controversy* was made in 1911. It had been contemplated for some time by the author. The character of these changes and the reasons why they were made, were discussed by Elder W. C. White, son of Mrs. E. G. White, in an address before the General Conference Council, October 30, 1911.

He said in part:

"In the body of the book, the most noticeable improvement is the introduction of historical references. In the old edition, over seven hundred Biblical references were given, but in only a few instances were there any historical references to the authorities quoted or referred to. In the new edition the reader will find more than four hundred references to eighty-eight authors and authorities.

"When we presented to mother the request of some of our canvassers, that there should be given in the new edition, not only Scripture references, but also references to the historians quoted, she instructed us to hunt up and insert the historical references. She also instructed us to verify the quotations, and to correct any

inaccuracies found; and where quotations were made from passages that were rendered differently by different translators, to use that translation which was found to be most correct and authentic.

"In a few instances new quotations from historians, preachers, and present-day writers have been used in the place of the old, because they are more forceful, or because we have been unable to find the old ones. In each case where there has been such a change, mother has given faithful attention to the proposed substitution, and has approved of the change.

"In eight or ten places, time references have been changed because of the lapse of time since the book was first published.

"In several places, forms of expression have been changed to avoid giving unnecessary offense. An example of this will be found in the change of the word 'Romish' to 'Roman' or 'Roman Catholic.' In two places the phrase 'divinity of Christ' is changed to 'deity of Christ.' And the words 'religious toleration' have been changed to 'religious liberty.'

"On pages 50, 563, 564, 580, 581, and in a few other places where there were statements regarding the Papacy which are strongly disputed by Roman Catholics, and which are difficult to prove from accessible histories, the wording in the new edition has been so changed that the statement falls easily within the range of evidence that is readily obtainable.

"Regarding these and similar passages which might stir up bitter and unprofitable controveries, mother has often said: 'What I have written regarding the arrogance and the assumptions of the Papacy, is true. Much historical evidence regarding these matters has been designedly destroyed; nevertheless, that the book may be of the greatest benefit to Catholics and others, and that needless controversies may be avoided, it is better to have all statements regarding the assumptions of the pope and the claims of the Papacy, stated so moderately as to be easily and clearly proved from accepted histories that are within the reach of our ministers and students.'

"If you hear reports that some of the work done on this latest edition was done contrary to mother's wish, or without her knowledge, you can be sure that such reports are false, and unworthy of consideration. . . .

"The things which she has written out are descriptions of

'flashlight' pictures and other representations given her regarding the actions of men, and the influence of these actions upon the work of God for the salvation of men, with views of past, present, and future history in its relation to this work. In connection with the writing out of these views, she has made use of good and clear historical statements to help make plain to the reader the things which she is endeavoring to present. When I was a mere boy, I heard her read D'Aubigné's *History of the Reformation* to my father. She read to him a large part, if not the whole, of the five volumes. She has read other histories of the Reformation. This has helped her to locate and describe many of the events and the movements presented to her in vision. This is somewhat similar to the way in which the study of the Bible helps her to locate and describe the many figurative representations given to her regarding the development of the great controversy in our day between truth and error.

No Claim to Verbal Inspiration

"Mother has never laid claim to verbal inspiration, and I do not find that my father, or Elders Bates, Andrews, Smith, or Waggoner put forth this claim. If there were verbal inspiration in writing her manuscripts, why should there be on her part the work of addition or adaptation? It is a fact that mother often takes one of her manuscripts and goes over it thoughtfully, making additions that develop the thought still further.

"In her public ministry, mother has shown an ability to select from the storehouse of truth, matter that is well adapted to the needs of the congregation before her; and she has always thought that, in the selection of matter for publication in her books, the best judgment should be shown in selecting that which is best suited to the needs of those who will read the book.

"When we came to go over this matter for the purpose of giving historical references, there were some quotations which we could not find. In some cases there were found other statements making the same point, from other historians. Those were in books accessible in many public libraries. When we brought to mother's attention a quotation that we could not find, and showed her that there was another quotation that we had found, which made the same point, she said, 'Use the one you can give a reference to, so that the reader of the book, if he wishes to go to the source

and find it, can do so.' In that way some historical data have been substituted."

Mrs. White Approves Revision

It is proper now to inquire how Mrs. White herself felt regarding this revision of one of her most treasured volumes. It will be interesting, as well as profitable, to read in this connection a letter which she addressed to the editor of the *Review and Herald,* under date of July 25, 1911, dealing particularly with the question of the revision of this book:

Sanitarium, Calif.,
"July 25, 1911.

"Brother F. M. Wilcox,
"Takoma Park, D. C.

"Dear Brother Wilcox:

"A few days ago I received a copy of the new edition of the book *Great Controversy,* recently printed at Mountain View, and also a similar copy printed at Washington. The book pleases me. I have spent many hours looking through its pages, and I see that the publishing houses have done good work.

"The book *Great Controversy* I appreciate above silver or gold, and I greatly desire that it shall come before the people. While writing the manuscript of *Great Controversy,* I was often conscious of the presence of angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.

"Recently it was necessary for this book to be reset, because the electrotype plates were badly worn. It has cost me much to have this done, but I do not complain; for whatever the cost may be, I regard this new edition with great satisfaction.

"Yesterday I read what W. C. White has recently written to canvassing agents and responsible men at our publishing houses regarding the latest edition of *Great Controversy,* and I think he has presented the matter correctly and well.

"When I learned that *Great Controversy* must be reset, I determined that we would have everything closely examined, to see

if the truths it contained were stated in the very best manner, to convince those not of our faith that the Lord had guided and sustained me in the writing of its pages.

"As a result of the thorough examination by our most experienced workers, some changing in the wording has been proposed. These changes I have carefully examined, and approved. I am thankful that my life has been spared, and that I have strength and clearness of mind for this and other literary work.

"While preparing the book on the *Acts of the Apostles,* the Lord has kept my mind in perfect peace. This book will soon be ready for publication. When this book is ready for publication, if the Lord sees fit to let me rest, I shall say, Amen and Amen. If the Lord spares my life, I will continue to write, and to bear my testimony in the congregation of the people, as the Lord shall give me strength and guidance.

"There is now a great work of soulsaving to be accomplished in the home field. There should be a general awakening on the part of the people, and fresh efforts made to get the light of present truth before the world. In cities and villages and towns, in every possible way, let the light shine forth. Missionaries are needed everywhere, and hundreds of workers from our ranks should be carrying the light of truth to those who know it not. The messengers of truth must be wide awake. The Lord says to them: Let light go forth in warnings and in opening and explaining the Scriptures to the people.

"Day by day golden opportunities are opening for our publications to go forth as silent messengers of truth. Let men and women be selected for the canvassing work,—not from the floating, careless element, but from those who carry a burden for the extension of the knowledge of truth. Keen foresight and consecrated ability are needed at this time. Let those be selected for the canvassing work who are adapted to this line of work. Let not these feel that they must work hard to obtain a license to preach. The Lord is calling for efficient laborers in many lines of service. If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting before the people the publications that will explain to them the Word of God.

"Parents should consider that their children are constantly beset by temptation. They would receive strength to resist temptation if they would study with deep searching of heart the books containing the light of truth for this time. Parents, do not encourage your children to read literature that will be no help to them spiritually. Do not encourage them to read the story of the life of Christ in the form of a novel. We need to make solid, earnest preparation for the great day of God.

"God calls for missionary work to be done in our homes. Years have passed into eternity, leaving undone the work of conversion that should have been accomplished in our families. Many of our youth are not being fitted for the work that needs to be done. They are to let the light of truth shine forth in their lives.

(Signed) "ELLEN GOULD WHITE."

TYPICAL OF OTHER CHANGES

As indicated in this letter, every change made in this revision was authorized and approved by the author, and if she was authorized to pen this volume in the beginning, she surely was fully competent to make any changes and additions for the new edition that would better express the truths entrusted to her.

ADDITIONS TO LATER EDITIONS OF BOOKS

Divine revelation is progressive. This is indicated in these words of the Master to the disciples:

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." John 16:12, 13.

And when the Holy Spirit did come, beginning with the day of Pentecost, what a revelation of Scriptural truth was brought to the disciples. The touch of divine enlightenment clarified many things which before were dark. It gave power to their testimony and fruitage to their labors. They demonstrated that "the path of the just is as the

shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

It is the design of God that His children should grow in wisdom and knowledge throughout their Christian experience. Successive revelations given to the holy prophets through the years increased their conception of divine truth, and gave them new visions of the character of God and the plan of salvation. This is true, we believe, in the experience of Mrs. White, and is responsible for additions which have been made in the later editions of her books.

This is well illustrated in the books known as Conflict of the Ages Series. The earlier books of Mrs. White, the series called *Spiritual Gifts,* and the four volumes of *The Spirit of Prophecy,* were written for the special benefit of the church. Both of these series had a very limited circulation. When the editions of these books were exhausted, there was prepared to take their place another series called Conflict of the Ages Series. This series was prepared for a larger circle of readers, and many copies were sold by subscription. Many statements which were found in the first two series of books were in this later series enlarged and amplified.

Mrs. White herself has made definite statement as to why some changes have been made in her published writings. We have before us a sixty-four-page pamphlet, entitled *Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White.* This was published by James White at Saratoga Springs, New York, in 1851. On page 9 of this pamphlet, immediately preceding an article entitled "To the Remnant Scattered Abroad," we find this statement:

"Here I will give the view that was first published in 1846. In this view I saw only a very few of the events of the future. More recent views have been more full. I shall therefore leave out a portion and prevent repetition."

The messenger of the Lord also recognized that there was certain instruction which was appropriate to the church and its needs, that would not be fitting to publish broadcast to the world. She herself makes the following statement regarding this:

"There are matters in the *Testimonies* that are written, not for the world at large, but for the believing children of God, and it is not appropriate to make instruction, warning, reproof, or counsel of this character public to the world. The world's Redeemer, the Sent of God, the greatest Teacher the children of men ever knew, presented some matters of instruction, not to the world, but to His disciples alone. While He had communications designed for the multitudes that thronged His steps, He also had some special light and instruction to impart to His followers, which He did not impart to the great congregation, as it would neither be understood nor appreciated by them."—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, p. 34.*

God, in carrying on His work in the earth, does not leave men without occasion to reject His revelation. The psalmist declares that to the froward man God will show Himself froward, and to the righteous God will show Himself righteous. (Ps. 18:25, 26.) Not that there is frowardness in God, but the froward man judges God by his own narrow vision and his own conception of right.

We cannot judge of divine revelation by mere details. We must judge by great underlying principles. We cannot judge the Book of God by isolated expressions or by the things which form the groundwork of the caviling unbeliever. We must judge the Book by the fruit it bears, by the spirit that accompanies it. And thus we must judge the writings of the messenger of the Lord to the remnant church.

CHAPTER 15

The Extent of Mrs. White's Writings

IT is interesting to consider, in this connection, the large volume of work accomplished by Mrs. White during her busy life. As she was a public speaker of unusual ability, her services were in constant demand at conferences and general meetings held by the denomination in various parts of the world. She labored extensively in North America, in Europe, and in Australasia, and thousands in the various countries visited bore testimony to the great spiritual help and quickening of Christian life and activity which they received from her labors.

But by her pen, in the writing of articles for the various denominational papers, and in the preparation of books for general circulation, her labors were more extensive and her influence more extended than through her public labors.

A WIDE SCOPE OF WRITING

The writings of Mrs. E. G. White cover a wide range of thought and experience. Nearly forty volumes through the years came from her facile pen. In some instances this matter was a duplication. Some later books contain compilations from her former publications. Her written works could perhaps be divided into two general classifications:

1. The *Testimonies for the Church,* and books dealing with various phases of church work and Christian experience.

2. Books dealing with the great controversy between truth and error, from the creation to the final consummation.

Of her method of preparing some of these books, especially the latter class, she herself said:

"Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God's holy law. . . .

"As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His word, and the scenes of the past and future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed, —to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future. In pursuance of this purpose, I have endeavored to select and group together events in the history of the church in such a manner as to trace the unfolding of the great testing truths that at different periods have been given to the world, that have excited the wrath of Satan, and the enmity of the world-loving church, and that have been maintained by the witness of those who 'loved not their lives unto the death.' "—*The Great Controversy, Introduction, pp. v-xi.*

The following list, with date of publication, comprises, according to our best knowledge, the principal books which came from her ever-busy pen. This list does not include, however, some compilations made from books which had already been published.

Early Writings .... 1851-58 (Spiritual Gifts), 1882
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. I 1855-1868
Spiritual Gifts, Vol. I (The Great Controversy) 1858

Life Sketches 1860, 1880, 1915
Spiritual Gifts, Vol. II 1860
Spiritual Gifts, Vol. III 1864
Spiritual Gifts, Vol. IV 1864
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. II 1868-1871
Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. I 1870
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. III 1872-1875
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. IV 1876-1881
Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. II 1877
Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. III 1878
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. V 1882
Sketches From the Life of Paul 1883
Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. IV 1884
Great Controversy 1888, 1907, 1911
Patriarchs and Prophets 1890, 1908
Gospel Workers 1892, 1915, 1920
Steps to Christ 1892, 1908
Christian Education 1893
Christ Our Saviour 1896
Desire of Ages 1898
Christ's Object Lessons 1900
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. VI 1900
Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing 1900
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. VII 1902
Education 1903
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. VIII 1904
Ministry of Healing 1905
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. IX 1909
Acts of the Apostles 1911
Counsels to Teachers 1913
Prophets and Kings 1917
Counsels on Health 1923
Fundamentals of Christian Education 1923
Testimonies to Ministers ..... 1923 (1888 onward)
Messages to Young People 1930
Medical Ministry 1932
Sanctified Life 1937
Counsels on Diet and Foods 1938
Counsels on Stewardship 1940

Not all the writings of Mrs. White are in this collection. Thousands of pages have been published in the *Review and Herald,* the *Signs of the Times,* and other denominational papers. Each of these thirty-eight volumes is a distinct publication. Each book represents much labor and earnest effort. A number of these books have been issued in other languages, and are published in various countries throughout the world.

The Income From Publications

When we take account of the large number of books that came from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White, and the extensive circulation they have received, the question is naturally suggested, Did not these publications bring to their author a princely income, making Mrs. White immensely wealthy? Strange as it may seem, the very reverse was true. Thousands of dollars were indeed received by Mrs. White, but she did not become wealthy, because of her many benefactions. Not only did she use all the income thus received, but borrowed many thousands of dollars which were used in ways indicated below. When Mrs. White died in July, 1915, it was found that her estate carried an indebtedness of nearly $90,000. How was this large indebtedness incurred? This came about because of the following reasons:

1. Her earnest effort to place the instruction, which she believed God had given her, in the various languages of the world, and the liberal investment she made for the purpose of translation. This work of promoting her books oftentimes involved as initial expense the payment of quite a large sum of money before any returns could come from the books. Some of the foreign editions of Mrs. White's books carried no royalty return. The

rate on foreign books carrying royalty was much lower than that of the English books. She depended upon the royalties which would be received to meet this initial expense, the same as our publishing houses do today when they put thousands of dollars into some new book, depending upon its sale later for reimbursement. Oftentimes the anticipated income from such sales has not been realized by our publishing houses. And this was true in the experience of Mrs. White. Sometimes our people were slow to promote the messages which the Lord instructed her to give the people, and this involved a carrying of indebtedness, which under other circumstances would have been promptly met.

2. Mrs. White herself through all the years made liberal donations to various branches of the work. Her heart responded to the calls of our mission fields. Indeed, when she herself led in emphasizing the need of the world-wide proclamation of the message, of planting the standard of truth in the regions beyond, she could not consistently do otherwise than set an example in sustaining these enterprises by her own donations.

Mrs. White borrowed thousands of dollars with which to advance the interests of the work in various fields. To a brother from whom she was requesting a loan for this purpose in the year 1904, Mrs. White wrote as follows:

"I invest in the work of God all the means that I can possibly spare. I sent one thousand dollars to Elder Haskell to help in beginning the work in New York City. . . .

"I wish that I had money to invest in other places, like Greater New York. Many cities in the South should be worked. We who know the truth should do what we can to proclaim the truth in new places, to carry the light to those who are in darkness of error. . . .

"Can you influence any of those whom you know to be entrusted by the Lord with the talent of means, to lend me money, with or without interest, to be used in the work of the Lord? I will give my note for whatever sums I may receive. In the past some have lent me money without interest. And no one has ever asked me for the return of his money without receiving it.

"If our brethren will now lend me money, with or without interest, I will invest it in various parts of the field to help carry forward the work that needs to be done.

"It was thus that I helped in the advancement of the work in Australia. . . . I borrowed money for the erection of meeting-houses, and to provide facilities for tent meetings. . . . I used the royalties on my books to help in starting a school in Melbourne, and then I borrowed money from those who were interested in the work. . . .

"We realize that the truths of the Word of God must be carried to all the world, and we are doing the best we can. I have helped the work in Europe as much as possible. It cost me over three thousand dollars to have my books translated into the foreign languages. All the royalty on my books sold in Europe, I have given to the work in that field. This has amounted to several thousand dollars. . . .

"Besides what I have invested in Australia and in Europe, I have also made donations to the Southern field. I have borrowed money to send to them when they were in strait places. I shall continue to do all I can to help the needy fields. Time is short, and I wish to see the money of our people that is tied up in banks put into circulation, where it can help the work of God.

"When I receive what I have invested in my books, I hope to have money sufficient to repay what I have borrowed, and to have more of my own money to use."—*MS., C-103-1904.*

This course of Mrs. White in borrowing means for the advancement of the work was no violation of the testimonies she had borne against debt. She said that debt should be shunned as we would shun the leprosy. She recognized that there was a vital difference between debts contracted by institutions or conferences or persons not having an earning power to pay their debts, and the

borrowing of money for the carrying on of a business with a regular income. She herself from her publications had an assured income, and there were assets which were sufficient to form a sound basis of credit, the assets with earning power being sufficient to meet the amounts of money which were borrowed by her.

3. Mrs. White gave liberally of her means to supply help to individuals who were in need. She and her husband through the years assisted many worthy young men and women in obtaining an education and in finding a place in gospel work. Mrs. White gave liberally in assisting aged and infirm ministers before definite provision was made for their support, as is now found in the sustentation provision.

Mrs. White never engaged in speculation. She never invested any of her means in questionable enterprises. She was obliged to entrust the management of her financial affairs very largely to others. Mrs. White never lived extravagantly, but always plainly and simply. Her indebtedness proved her devotion to the work which she believed had been given her of God, of publishing to the world the light she had received. It is to her credit that she did not amass a large fortune, as did certain leaders of other great movements.

The Disposition of Mrs. White's Debts

What has been done about this indebtedness left by Mrs. E. G. White? Have these debts been paid? How have they been paid? These are some of the inquiries which came from the field to Elder C. H. Watson when he was president of the General Conference. We are privileged to quote in this connection a portion of a letter written by Elder Watson on this subject:

"I understand Sister White did owe an amount somewhere in the neighborhood of $90,000 at the time of her death. She, however, left assets of considerable value. Some of these were of a character that provided the estate with a reasonable annual income. Any statement of the value of the assets for the purpose of probate did not, of course, include figures that would represent the potential earnings of such assets. The General Conference Corporation did advance sufficient money to liquidate this indebtedness. This whole transaction has been held in separate account in the General Conference books, and against the sum advanced to the estate the earnings of the estate have been credited. It is a matter of satisfaction to inform you that the whole of the money so advanced has now been returned to the General Conference by the trustees of the estate, and they have been able to do this entirely from the sale and earnings of assets."

Estimate of the Public Press

The writings of Mrs. White have been read by tens of thousands throughout the world. Many thousands have listened to her addresses on temperance and various Christian themes, given in North America, Europe, and Australasia; and many who had no organic connection with Seventh-day Adventists have expressed high appreciation of her work. Following her death, many secular journals bore testimony to the genuine worth of her character. We have space to quote only a few of these testimonials:

"A highly gifted and talented woman of nation-wide prominence."—*Napa (Calif.) Register, July 23, 1915.*

"Besides remarkable talents as a preacher, Mrs. White displayed great organizing and administrative ability. These were all given to her church. It grew and prospered and spread into many lands. The printing press was a great aid, universities were founded, also medical schools, hospitals, and schools for teachers and missionaries."—*Jackson (Mich.) Patriot, July 25, 1915.*

"Mrs. White was a remarkable woman in many ways. She was deeply religious, and none who knew her intimately had any doubt as to her sincerity. . . . That she believed in the divine inspiration of her visions, need not be questioned. She was a woman of strong character and unusual intelligence, and has left her mark on the century in which she lived."—*News Tribune (Detroit, Mich.), July 25, 1915.*

"Mrs. White was probably one of the best known women in the world. She had traveled extensively, had lectured to large audiences in many countries, and her writings had been published in various languages, carrying to people of nearly all tongues the message she felt called upon by God to deliver.

"The life of Mrs. White is an example worthy of emulation by all. Though of limited education, for the greater part of her long life in poor health, she never faltered, but for seventy-two years carried and preached the message of Jesus Christ, as understood by her, to the farthermost corners of the earth. She was a humble, devout disciple of Christ, and ever went about doing good. Her writings have been published in books, papers, and periodicals. She was revered by all the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and honored and respected by all who appreciate noble womanhood consecrated to unselfish labor for the uplifting and betterment of mankind. Her death marks the calling of another noted leader of religious thought, and one whose almost ninety years were full to overflowing with good deeds, kind words, and earnest prayers for all mankind."—*Editorial in the St. Helena (Calif.) Star, July 25, 1915.*

"In her Christian service, Mrs. White endeavored always to keep in closest touch with the world's activities and needs. As an evangelist, she often preached to thousands, her voice having unusual resonance and carrying power; and as a worker in temperance and health lines she wielded a wide influence. . . .

"In all her teachings she insisted on a return to sound Scriptural doctrine and to apostolic simplicity. She recognized the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the supreme rule of faith and practice. She often stated that her mission was not to attempt to teach any new principles, but rather to call attention anew to principles plainly taught in the Bible for the observance of all, whatever their creed or affiliation."—*Kennebec (Maine) Journal, July 17, 1915.*

The New York *Independent,* on the occasion of Mrs. White's death, in 1915, made a discriminating statement, for a magazine of the world. First of all, this magazine, which used to be called the leading religious journal, bore witness to the spirit of the movement. Of the Adventist teachings and spirit the *Independent* said:

"Of course, these teachings were based on the strictest doctrine of inspiration of the Scriptures. Seventh-day Adventism could be got in no other way. And the gift of prophecy was to be expected, as promised to the 'remnant church,' who had held fast to the truth. This faith gave great purity of life and incessant zeal. No body of Christians excels them in moral character and religious earnestness."

This journal went on to describe the rise and growth of this movement, referring to the number of publishing houses and colleges and schools and health institutions which have been built up in all parts of the world. The *Independent* concluded:

"In all this Ellen G. White has been the inspiration and guide. Here is a noble record, and she deserves great honor.

"Did she really receive divine visions, and was she really chosen by the Holy Spirit to be endued with the charism of prophecy? or was she the victim of an excited imagination? Why should we answer? One's doctrine of the Bible may affect the conclusion. At any rate, she was absolutely honest in her belief in her revelations. Her life was worthy of them. She showed no spiritual pride and she sought no filthy lucre. She lived the life and did the work of a worthy prophetess."—*August 23, 1915.*

The editor of the Toledo *Blade,* in an article entitled "A Modern Prophetess," speaks of the great influence of Mrs. White in molding the movement with which she was connected, and closes with this statement:

"Mrs. White was a remarkable woman. Had she lived in an earlier period of the career of Christianity, and escaped the bigots

and the fire, she would most surely have been canonized. She was of the flesh of which saints are made."

Some religious journals which had no sympathy with the work of Seventh-day Adventists spoke most kindly of the work of Mrs. E. G. White and the influence attending her life. One editor who took occasion in an extended article to criticize severely the denomination to which Mrs. White belonged, closed his criticism with this beautiful ecomium of Mrs. White's life and work:

"Her long, eventful life has closed, but as it closed, beautiful lights of self-sacrifice and devotion are left shining throughout the world, lit up by heavenly thoughts from her fruitful mind and loving heart. Sweet be her long-deserved rest until the great Life-giver shall speak her into life eternal."

CHAPTER 16

A Balanced Acceptance

NATURALLY in our study of either inspired or uninspired writings, we inquire, What application have the principles herein set forth to our day and generation? It is proper to make this inquiry in relation to the writings of Mrs. E. G. White. She passed to her rest in the year 1915, dying at a ripe old age, her faith undimmed and her zeal for service to the Master unabated. She rests from her labors, but her works follow her.

To what extent should her writings be regarded as truth for the present hour? Did not many of them apply years ago, and have no application at the present time? Some would answer this last question in the affirmative. They claim that times have changed, that terms employed have other meanings today than formerly, that we have reached an age of new ideals and standards, and therefore our obedience to the instruction given years ago should be modified accordingly. Thus many reason not only regarding the writings of Mrs. White, but concerning the instruction in the Sacred Canon also.

That some of the instruction to the church through Mrs. White was local in its primary application, we do not deny. This is true also of many prophecies found in the Bible. When one reads the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the lesser prophets, he must recognize that much of their instruction had first reference to

the days in which they lived. By their warnings they were seeking to avert the judgments which threatened Israel of old. But the principles which they set forth not only applied to local conditions in the days in which they lived, but in many instances can be applied with great profit to conditions existing in the world and in the church at the present time.

The same is true, we believe, of the writings of Mrs. E. G. White. On many occasions through the years she dealt with conditions in the church as they arose. Her instruction applied primarily to the day in which she lived and the conditions which were before her; but much of this instruction, the same as the instruction given by the prophets of old, had a more far-reaching application. To the extent that similar conditions might arise in the church in any future period, this instruction would apply with equal emphasis. Indeed, in much of the instruction that was given, the special application seemed to be to the closing days of the history of the church. A striking example of this is afforded in the concluding chapters of the books *Early Writings* and *The Great Controversy*.

The same argument employed by opponents of this movement against the application of Old Testament Scriptures to the present time is used by some in impairing the force of the instruction given in the Testimonies in its application to present-day conditions. It is comparatively easy to reason in this way, to accept from the writings of the Lord's messenger those statements which meet our mind and strengthen our position, and give emphasis to the campaign in which we are engaged, and discredit or ignore other statements from the same source which may be contrary to our desires or cut across our plans and our habits of life.

Vitiating the Instruction

Unfortunately, there is a tendency on the part of some in the church to deal with this instruction in a careless way. They gladly use such portions of Mrs. White's writings as they think can be made to serve their own ends, but immediately raise questions as to the present-day application of instruction which cuts across their plans and purposes.

This amounts virtually to a rejection of this gift to the church. It vitiates the writings of the Spirit of prophecy, and subjects them to the decision of human caprice and personal prejudice and convenience. Of this class we read:

"There are some professed believers who accept certain portions of the Testimonies as the message of God, while they reject those portions that condemn their favorite indulgences. Such persons are working contrary to their own welfare, and the welfare of the church."—*Testimonies, Vol. IX, p. 154.*

"Some who wish to strengthen their own position, will bring forward from the Testimonies statements which they think will support their views, and will put the strongest possible construction upon them; but that which questions their course of action, or which does not coincide with their views, they pronounce Sister White's opinion, denying its heavenly origin, and placing it on a level with their own judgment."—*Id., Vol. V, p. 688.*

If one accepts the argument of Scripture that this gift is to be manifested in the remnant church, and if he accepts it in those matters which agree with his own plans and practices, then to be consistent he should accept it in every feature of the instruction that has been imparted throughout. Otherwise his position is one of rejection.

A person who accepts one portion of the Testimonies and rejects other portions places his influence directly against this gift in the church. His influence for evil is

much more potent than if he openly and consistently opposed all the writings. Then there would be no question as to his attitude, and his influence would not be deceptive. Referring to some she had tried to help, Mrs. White makes this statement:

"These brethren took this position: We believe the visions, but Sister White, in writing them, put in her own words, and we will believe that portion which we think is of God, and will not heed the other. This course they have pursued, and have not corrected their lives. They have professed to believe the visions, but have acted contrary to them. Their example and influence have raised doubts in the minds of others. It would have been better for the cause of present truth had they both opposed the gifts. Then the people would not have been deceived, and would not have stumbled over these blind teachers."—*Id., Vol. I, p. 234.*

Significantly she wrote at a later time:

"What reserve power has the Lord with which to reach those who have cast aside His warnings and reproofs, and have accredited the testimonies of the Spirit of God to no higher source than human wisdom. In the Judgment, what can you who have done this, offer to God as an excuse for turning from the evidences He has given you that God was in the work? 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' "—*Testimonies to Ministers, p. 466.*

Present Time Application

Referring once more to the principle governing the application of the instruction to present-day conditions, we will say, where the same or similar evils exist in the church today and the same or similar conditions prevail, the instruction that was given years ago applies with the same force with which it applied when originally given. This principle is clearly enunciated with reference to the publication of personal testimonies:

"Since the warning and instruction given in testimony for individual cases applied with equal force to many others who had not been especially pointed out in this manner, it seemed to be my duty to publish the personal testimonies for the benefit of the church. . . .

"In a view given me about twenty years ago, I was directed to bring out general principles, in speaking and in writing, and at the same time to specify the dangers, errors, and sins of some individuals, that all might be warned, reproved, and counseled. I saw that all should search their own hearts and lives closely, to see if they had not made the same mistakes for which others were corrected, and if the warnings given for others did not apply to their own cases. If so, they should feel that the counsel and reproofs were given especially for them, and should make as practical an application of them as though they were especially addressed to themselves. . . . God designs to test the faith of all who claim to be followers of Christ. He will test the sincerity of the prayers of all those who claim to earnestly desire to know their duty. He will make duty plain. He will give all an ample opportunity to develop what is in their hearts.

"In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the Testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will, and the course that He would have them pursue."—*Testimonies, Vol. V, pp. 658-661.*

The sincere believer in the Testimonies will not be seeking continually to evade their just claims. His attitude will be that of Samuel of old, "Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth." And learning the way of the Lord, he will be prompt to yield his own way and subordinate his own desires to the leadings of the Spirit of God. May God give to each of us this attitude of heart and mind.

CHAPTER 17

Relation to Church Fellowship

As we consider the subject of spiritual gifts and their manifestation in the church, the question naturally arises, Should faith in this doctrine be made a test of church fellowship?

Those seeking membership in the church should be carefully instructed in all the truths of the gospel. They should know, first of all, that Christ is their Saviour and that their sins have been washed away in the blood shed on Cavalry. They should be taught that the test of faith and love is found in obedience to the divine requirements, but that the law of God can be expressed in the life only as it is written in the heart by the operation of the Spirit in the new covenant relationship. They should be instructed in the evidences of Christ's soon coming, and in the prophecies pointing out last-day world conditions and the special work to be done in the preparation of a people to stand in the day of the Lord.

Candidates for church membership should be taught to realize that they are not their own, but Christ's, and therefore they should honor Him in their bodies, His temples, by wearing proper attire, and providing such food and drink as make for strength and not for drunkenness; and that their lives and property should be placed upon the altar of sacrificial service for others as the Spirit shall indicate. They should be instructed in church or-

ganization and polity, in the historical development of this movement, in the doctrine of spiritual gifts, and especially the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, which Heaven has used so largely in fostering the work of this movement. Particularly should they be taught that these gifts answer to the word of prophecy in their manifestation in the remnant church.

Inasmuch as the labors of Mrs. E. G. White have entered so largely into the development of the second advent movement, candidates for church membership should be made acquainted with the divine ministry to which she was called, and the influence of her labors and writings through the years. Opportunity should be afforded them to read her published books. When this instruction has been given candidates, but little question ever will be raised as to faith in the doctrine of spiritual gifts being made a test of church fellowship.

If, as the result of this investigation, the one contemplating church membership arrives at settled convictions in opposition to this doctrine, he naturally will not wish to unite his interests with a church that holds it as a part of its religious faith. In any event he should be encouraged to wait until he has had time and opportunity for more mature study of the question.

If, on the other hand, while in full sympathy with his Adventist brethren regarding their faith and objectives and their church polity and organization, he still feels doubts over the doctrine of spiritual gifts and their exercise in the church, but has no opposition to the fullest and freest exercise of faith in these gifts on the part of his brethren, and to the free use of the instruction which has come to the church from the gift of prophecy, he need not necessarily be excluded from church membership.

Elder J. N. Andrews records the attitude of the church on this matter in these words:

"In the reception of members into our churches, we desire on this subject to know two things: 1. That they believe the Bible doctrine of Spiritual gifts; 2. That they will candidly acquaint themselves with the visions of Sister White, which have ever held so prominent place in this work. We believe that every person standing thus and carrying out this purpose will be guided in the way of truth and righteousness. And those who occupy the ground, are never denied all the time they desire to decide in this matter."—*Review and Herald, Feb. 15, 1870.*

Spiritual Gifts and Church Membership

Regarding this phase of the question, the messenger of the Lord, writing in 1862, gives this guiding counsel:

"In the last vision given at Battle Creek I was shown that an unwise course was taken at ——— in regard to the visions at the time of the organization of the church there. There were some in ——— who were God's children, and yet doubted the visions. Others had no opposition, yet dared not take a decided stand in regard to them. Some were skeptical, and they had sufficient cause to make them so. The false visions and fanatical exercises, and the wretched fruits following, had an influence upon the cause in Wisconsin, to make minds jealous of everything bearing the name of visions. All these things should have been taken into consideration, and wisdom exercised. There should be no trial or labor with those who have never seen the individual having visions, and who have had no personal knowledge of the influence of the visions. Such should not be deprived of the benefits and privileges of the church, if their Christian course is otherwise correct, and they have formed a good Christian character.

"Some, I was shown, could receive the published visions,* judging of the tree by its fruits. Others are like doubting Thomas; they cannot believe the published Testimonies, nor receive evidence through the testimony of others, but must see and have the experience for themselves. Such must not be set aside, but long patience

*The "published visions" at this time consisted of two small books and a few pamphlets.

and brotherly love should be exercised toward them until they find their position and become established for or against. If they fight against the visions, of which they have no knowledge; if they carry their opposition so far as to oppose that in which they have had no experience, and feel annoyed when those who believe that the visions are of God speak of them in meeting, and comfort themselves with the instruction given through vision, the church may know that they are not right.

"God's people should not cringe and yield and give up their liberty to such disaffected ones. God has placed the gifts in the church that the church may be benefited by them; and when professed believers in the truth oppose these gifts, and fight against the visions, souls are in danger through their influence, and it is time then to labor with them, that the weak may not be led astray by their influence."—*Testimonies, Vol. I, pp. 327-329.*

Not a Hard and Fast Rule

"I have been shown that some, especially in Iowa, make the visions a rule by which to measure all; and have taken a course which my husband and myself have never pursued. Some are unacquainted with me and my labors, and they are very skeptical of anything bearing the name of visions. This is all natural, and can be overcome only by experience. If persons are not settled in regard to the visions, they should not be crowded off. The course to pursue with such may be found in Testimony No. 8, pp. 328, 329 [quoted above], which I hope will be read by all.

"Ministers should have compassion of some, making a difference; others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. God's ministers should have wisdom to give to every one his portion of meat, and to make that difference with different persons which their cases require.

"The course pursued with some in Iowa who are unacquainted with me, has not been careful and consistent. Those who were, comparatively, strangers to the visions, have been dealt with in the same manner as those who have had much light and experience in the visions. Some have been required to endorse the visions when they could not conscientiously do so, and in this way some honest souls have been driven to take positions against the visions and

against the body, which they never would have taken had their cases been managed with discretion and mercy.

"Some of our brethren have had long experience in the truth, and have for years been acquainted with me and with the influence of the visions. They have tested the truthfulness of these testimonies, and asserted their belief in them. They have felt the powerful influence of the Spirit of God resting upon them to witness to the truthfulness of the visions. If such, when reproved through vision, rise up against them, and work secretly to injure our influence, they should be faithfully dealt with, for their influence is endangering those who lack experience."—*Id., pp. 382, 383.*

The Testimony of Early Leaders

In full harmony with the above are statements made by leading workers through the years, of which we give two here. James White testifies:

"They [Seventh-day Adventists] believe in the perpetuity of spiritual gifts. They believe that the Spirit of prophecy has rested upon Mrs. White, and that she is called to do a special work at this time, among this people. They do not, however, make a belief in this work a test of Christian fellowship. But, after men and women have had evidence that the work is of God, and then join hands with those who fight against it, our people claim the right to separate from such, that they may enjoy their sentiments in peace and quiet."—*Review and Herald, June 13, 1871.*

On this point, Elder J. N. Andrews writes:

"We therefore do not test the world in any manner by these gifts. Nor do we in our intercourse with other religious bodies who are striving to walk in the fear of God, in any way make these a test of Christian character. Upon none of these persons do we urge these manifestations of the Spirit of God, nor test them by their teaching.

"There is such a thing, however, as men having in the providence of God an opportunity to become acquainted with the special work of the Spirit of God, so that they shall acknowledge that their light is clear, convincing, and satisfactory. To such persons, we consider the gifts of the Spirit are clearly a test. Not only has

God spoken, but they have had opportunity to ascertain that fact, and to know it for themselves. In all such cases, spiritual gifts are manifestly a test that cannot be disregarded except at the peril of eternal ruin."—*Review and Herald, Feb. 15, 1870.*

Disfellowshiping Members

Should the church disfellowship one who does not have faith in the work of Mrs. E. G. White?

This question is closely related to the preceding one, and the same principle applies. In the practice of the church it has not been customary to disfellowship one because he did not recognize the doctrine of spiritual gifts in the church, particularly the gift of prophecy as represented in the work of Mrs. White. However, if one should develop unbelief, and begin to oppose the position held by the church on the subject of spiritual gifts, the church has considered it necessary to labor for such members the same as they would in the cases of those who opposed any other doctrine held by the church. They have justly become subjects for labor, not because of their lack of faith in the Spirit of prophecy, but because of their spirit of opposition to a cherished faith held by the church.

Ministers and Church Faith

A third question closely related to the two preceding ones is worthy of consideration in this connection: Is it consistent for a worker to continue his ministerial labors in the church if he does not believe in the work of Mrs. E. G. White?

It surely would be inconsistent. A belief in the doctrine of spiritual gifts has characterized the believers in this movement from their earliest days. The Spirit of prophecy has been manifested in the church as one of these gifts. The exercise of this gift has had much to do

in the shaping and molding of this movement. Under God it has been a very important factor in saving the church from disunion, in safeguarding it from great delusion in times of crisis, in quickening its missionary activities, and in deepening the spiritual consecration and devotion of the membership.

Closely identified as this gift has been with the history of this movement from its earliest days, it surely would be inconsistent for any minister who discredits this experience to seek to represent the denomination in an official capacity. Not having faith in the gift which God has placed in the church, he would be unable to pass on to the church the spirit of the instruction coming to the church through that gift. It seems to us that a loss of faith on the part of a minister in this gift, even if it were unknown to his brethren, would lead him as an honest man to surrender his credentials and cease his labors in a representative relationship. His credentials are given him, not for the purpose of representing his own individual ideas, but to preach the gospel; and to preach that gospel, not as held by the Methodists, or Baptists, or Presbyterians, but as taught and believed by Seventh-day Adventists.

While a lack of faith in the subject of spiritual gifts might be excused in the rank and file of the membership, it cannot be justly condoned in the case of those chosen for responsible or official positions in the church. Leadership involves solemn responsibility, and the church has a right to demand that those chosen for positions of trust and influence should be examples to the flock, not alone in life and character, but also in religious faith. While, therefore, a member of the church should not be excluded from membership because of his inability to recognize clearly the doctrine of spiritual gifts and its application

to the second advent movement, no one should be chosen or retained as a representative of the denomination, either as a minister or as a church or conference official, who does not believe the principles of faith taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The denomination that issues to its accredited representatives ministerial credentials, has a right to expect that in this relationship they will stand for the principles of the people who send them forth and who support them in their work.

Common Honesty

An article in the Washington *Post* enunciates this principle very clearly. The editor is speaking of common honesty in church relationship, and makes this very pertinent and sensible comment on this principle:

> "It is certainly not tyranny or persecution for the authorities of a religious body to require common honesty in the conduct of its ministers. No secular organization permits its agents to violate its rules and impair its strength. . . . No minister has a moral right to use the influence of his position in spreading dissension in the denomination whose commission he bears, and to whose creed he pledged fidelity as a condition precedent to his ordination. The world is wide. It has room enough for all creeds and all beliefs and their advocates. No man is compelled to belong to any church or to preach any doctrine. But an honest man, having been ordained to preach any particular doctrine, will step down and out, on his own motion, when he becomes convinced that the doctrine or creed is not true."

CHAPTER 18

Opposition Fulfills Prophecy

THE best evidence one can give that he accepts the Bible as God's message of love and salvation, is to take it as the man of his counsel—the lamp to his feet and the light to his path—and to reveal the power of the Divine Word in a life transformed by the Holy Spirit into the character of his Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is true as applied to the writings which come through the gift of prophecy. The best evidence which one can show of his faith in the divine origin of these writings is an earnest endeavor to bring his life into harmony with their teachings. He may differ with some of his brethren as to technicalities, but if he is seeking to regulate his own life—and if a leader in the church, to fashion the work of the church and the polity of this movement—by the instruction which has come to us through the Lord's messenger, that is the best evidence he can furnish his brethren of his faith in the doctrine of spiritual gifts. Obedience, rather than definitions of technical points of difference, is the real test of faith as relates to the teachings both of the Bible and of the Testimonies.

In connection with the writings of Mrs. E. G. White are technical questions which may be difficult to understand, just as there are similar questions relating to the Holy Scriptures. Some of these questions we have discussed in preceding chapters. We regret that the limi-

tations of space preclude further discussion of some of these technicalities at the present time. But whether understood or not, these questions should not be magnified to the place where they constitute a test of orthodoxy or to where they become a bone of contention or a line of division between brethren. Let us seek to draw near to those who may differ with us, emphasizing the great principles upon which we are agreed, and minimizing the details on which we differ.

There have always been two classes in the church of Christ—the fast and the slow, the progressive and the conservative. These two classes exist today. Some are counted by their brethren as too slow and unbelieving, as was Thomas; and others are regarded as being radical and impulsive, as was Peter. God permits various temperaments to be associated in order that each may learn from the other, that the lack of one may be supplied by the abundance of the other.

Where the spirit of Christian charity is cherished, we shall not hear so often the cry of fanaticism, on the one hand, because some brother grows ardent and enthusiastic in his expression of faith; nor the charge of unbelief, on the other hand, because someone cannot move so fast as his associates would elect to travel. Christian charity holds to liberty without license, and to conservatism without reaction.

IDLE RUMOR AND REPORT

Through the years many idle reports have been in circulation as to what Sister White said about various questions. She is reported to have said something to some individual about some Bible topic or some phase of the work, statements which have never been included in her

published writings. And unfortunately, there are always found those who are ready to pick up these rumors and add to their circulation.

Regarding these rumors and reports we find the following good counsel in *Testimonies for the Church,* Volume V, page 696:

"And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say, Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has done or said or written. If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works. Are there any points of interest concerning which she has not written, do not eagerly catch up and report rumors as to what she has said."

If some who are so curious as to seek to run down every rumor, would spend more time in studying the published statements of the messenger of the Lord, they would have less interest in the unauthenticated reports which come to them.

The Athenians of old were noted for spending much of their time either in telling or in hearing some new thing. But unfortunately, this characteristic on their part led very few of them to accept the truths of the gospel proclaimed to them by the apostle Paul.

At War With the Church

It is a part of the Inspired Record that the remnant church would suffer persecution because of the fact that that church would uphold in their teaching and practice the commandments of God and would have manifested among them the Spirit of prophecy. Declares the inspired penman:

"The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17.

Opposition to the remnant church because of its teaching of the commandments of God, and particularly of Sabbath reform, has come from the world at large, from those who have never been connected with this movement. Almost the entire opposition to the Spirit of prophecy, as represented in the work of Mrs. E. G. White, has come from apostate Seventh-day Adventists. In this opposition they represent the wrath of the dragon against the remnant church, even as that same wrath is represented in the opposition in the world at large because of the observance of the Sabbath as one of the commandments of God.

Hence in the opposition which comes to us from these two sources we should recognize a sign of the times, a direct fulfillment of prophetic prediction made by the revelator two thousand years ago. This opposition, we may be sure, will grow no less, but will increase more and more, and it will not hesitate to use any and every unfair means in the accomplishment of its designs.

Believe the Lord and His Prophets

One who has had a living experience in connection with the work of the Spirit of prophecy in this church, finds no occasion to doubt its divine origin. The history of this movement reveals many instances where the Lord has used this gift for the preservation of His work. Many times in great crises God has sent through His servant a message which saved this church from grave errors and even from disruption.

We cannot see how anyone can prayerfully read the messages which have come through the years, and doubt their genuineness. They speak to one's heart. They carry with them the proof of their own inspiration.

Mrs. White's published writings are read today more

faithfully and by a larger circle than during her lifetime. These writings, as we have said, do not exalt the author, but point to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour from sin, to the Word of God as the infallible rule of faith and conduct, and to the Holy Spirit as the interpreter of that Word.

May we faithfully follow in the path which she so clearly pointed out, the path that leads to Him who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

CHAPTER 19

The Personal Touch

IT is in personal touch with individuals that we form our most intimate conceptions of the real spirit that actuates their lives. Unfortunately, this personal acquaintance with the messenger of the Lord has been denied the great majority of our readers. Believing, however, that they would appreciate, as far as possible, an acquaintance with her, we present her picture (see page 1), taken when she was in her prime, in active and buoyant service in the work of God; also a facsimile letter from Mrs. White to her husband, James White. This letter, of course, was not written with the thought that it would ever be published or be read by any outside of the immediate family circle. Even so, it breathes the same spirit of earnest consecration to God and of burden for the souls of others as is represented in all the writings of this messenger of God.

REPRODUCTION OF MRS. WHITE'S LETTER

"OAKLAND, CALIF., APRIL 7, 1880.

"DEAR HUSBAND:

"I am very cheerful and happy now the Lord has graciously blessed me and His peace is abiding in my heart. This morning we met in the basement of the church at half past five. I was led out in prayer, and my faith grasped the promises of God. I learned anew that my heavenly Father answers prayer. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be

glorified in the Son.' My soul is continually yearning for my Saviour.

" 'Let me to Thy bosom fly!'
'Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, oh, leave me not alone!
Still support and comfort me.'

"This has been the language of my soul ever since I have been upon this coast. All are so very busy I am alone in my room nearly all the time, and my mind has been very perplexed, my anxiety very great. My prayers have come from a burdened heart. But Jesus has lifted my burden, and He is a wellspring of joy in my soul. Christ's words seem to be spoken to me in the night season. I seem to hear His voice, 'If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.'

"I had the assurance that the Lord will bless you and let light shine upon you.

"I talked some this morning to our ministers upon faith. Everyone who is trying to labor is crippled with physical feebleness. How clear and positive the promises of God, and why not claim them? Why not accept the blessings presented? The conditions must be met on our part first, and then we may without presumption claim the promise. The claims of the gospel upon us, urge upon us consistency of character in accordance with our profession. We are to conduct ourselves as the representatives of Christ, knowing that the church and the world are looking to us and taking knowledge of us whether we are indeed like Christ, self-denying, cross-bearing, and cultivating, not our own natural tempers, but the spirit which Jesus possessed.

"The moral forces of our natural tempers must be resisted, or we shall strengthen the Satan side of our character, and self-respect is lost, self-reliance in God is gone, and the promises are not claimed, for we cannot come with assurance through Christ to the throne of grace. The Holy Spirit is grieved, darkness envelopes the soul, and yet in this very state, many ministers are trying to labor. An aching void they constantly have, but do not attribute it to the right cause. Jesus will work with our efforts. If we do what we can on our part, God will do on His part. Ministers may labor with the blessings of God abiding upon them. Jesus has bequeathed

peace to His followers. He has saved us by the offering of Himself to God, an offering spotless, that those He came to save may be through His merits unblamable, pure, and holy, for in order to do men good, we must inspire them with confidence in our piety. We must show the Christ side of our character. If they see we reflect the image of Christ in our words and deportment, then they will be affected, convinced, and saved.

"Our meetings move off well. We feel, deeply feel, our great need of Jesus, and, oh, such matchless love as He has expressed for us! My heart is melted with this love.

"I must now go to the eight o'clock meeting. Let us pray much and watch thereunto. I can trust everything in the hands of God.

"I shall have clear light in regard to my duty, and I will try to follow where Jesus leads the way. In much love,

(Signed) "Your Ellen."

Facsimile of Mrs. White's Letter

Oakland Cal April 7 1880
Dear Husband

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"Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave ~~me~~ ah! leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me."
This has been the language of my soul ever since I have been upon this coast. All are so very busy I am alone in my room nearly all the time, and my mind has been very perplexed my anxiety very great

My prayers have come from a burdened heart But Jesus has lifted my burden and he is a well spring of joy in my soul. Christ words seem to be spoken to me in the night season I seem to hear his voice If ye abide in me and my words abide in you ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.

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I talked some this morning to our ministers upon faith every one who is trying to labor are crippled with physical feebleness. How clear and positive the promises of God. And why not claim them why not accept the blessings presented. The conditions must be met on our part first and then we may without presumption claim the promise. The claims of the Gospel upon us urging upon us consistency of character in accordance with our profession. We are to conduct ourselves as the representatives of Christ knowing that the church and the world are looking to us and taking knowledge of us whether we are indeed like Christ self denying cross bearing and cultivating not our own natural tempers

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the way In much love Your Ellen.

The Affectionate Mother

Pressed by a continual burden to give to the church the light and messages with which God had entrusted her, Mrs. White carried also a true mother's burden of heart for her children. Their care oftentimes was entrusted to other hands, but she sought by every means in her power to safeguard their welfare and lead them to Christ. The following letter, addressed to her first-born, expresses this burden of heart which she carried, and is but another personal glimpse of Mrs. White's more intimate family life, revealing that in her home she represented the same virtues of Christian motherhood which she sought to teach others.

"Sommerville, Mass., Sept. 6, 1859.

"My dear Son Henry: We received your letter, and were very glad to hear from you. You must write oftener. Send us a letter at Topsham. Think of everything you have left there and wish us to bring, and we will try to do so.

"We hope you are well and happy. Be a good, steady boy. If you only fear God and love Him, our happiness will be complete.

You can be a noble boy. Love truthfulness and honesty. These are the sacred treasures. Do not lay them aside for a moment. You may be tempted and often tried, but, my dear boy, it is at such a time when these lovely treasures shine, and are highly prized. Cling closely to these precious traits, whatever you may be called to suffer. Let truthfulness and honesty ever live in your heart. Never through fear of punishment, sacrifice these noble traits. The Lord will help you, Henry, to do right. I believe it is your purpose to do right and please your parents.

"You may see little dishonest acts in other boys, but do not think for a moment of imitating them. Learn to despise such things. Do not condescend to mean talk or to mean acts. Shun the company of those who do evil, as you would a deadly poison; for they will corrupt every one who associates with them. Ever have your young mind lifted up, elevated above the low, evil habits of those who have no fear of God before them. You can have correct thoughts, correct ways, and can form a good, pure character.

"Our dear children are our treasures, and oh, how anxious we are that they should meet the approbation of God! In His strength you can reform, but never in your own strength. You can give the Lord your heart, and ask Him to forgive your sins; and if you move with sincerity He will accept you and make you white and clean in His own precious blood. We, your parents, pray much for you, that you may be a consistent, true Christian. We know that our Saviour is coming, and will take the good and holy, the honest and pure, to dwell with Him forever in a holy heaven, where all is beauty, harmony, joy, and glory. I want you to remember that Jesus suffered and died for you, that His blood might cleanse you from sin. But there is a work for you to do. May the Lord clearly open to your young mind the plan of salvation, and lead you to give yourself unreservedly to Jesus as His, to serve Him continually. Come to Him, dear boy; love Him because He first loved you; love Him for His lovely character; love Him because He loved you well enough to die for you.

"Henry, as soon as you were born we prayed that you might be a Christian boy. We believe that you have felt some of the influence of the Spirit of God upon your heart; but we want its sweet influence to abide upon you and the impressions lasting, your course steady, and you to daily receive grace to resist temptation.

"I must close. Do right because you love to. Preserve these letters I write to you, and read them often, and if you should be left without a mother's care, they will be a help to you.

"Your affectionate

"MOTHER."

—*"Appeal to the Youth—Experience, Last Sickness, and Funeral Address of Henry N. White."*

THE TEST OF TRIAL

The real test of character is not found in the days of prosperity. We find many fair-weather Christians who in the days of storm and tempest doubt the wisdom of God's leadings and surrender their faith in Him. Mrs. E. G. White passed through many trying experiences during her lifework. Probably the greatest test of her faith in God and her submission to the divine will was experienced in the death of her husband, which occurred August 6, 1881. At the time of his death Mrs. White herself was prostrated with sickness, and it was a question as to whether she could survive. Though she was so feeble that she had to be borne to the funeral, at the close of the discourse delivered by Elder Uriah Smith, she unexpectedly arose and spoke to the audience for about ten minutes. The following are some of her words on this occasion, words which show the spirit of resignation to the divine will which possessed her life and revealed the hope that buoyed her up in this hour of greatest grief:

"I want to say a few words to those present on this occasion. My dear Saviour has been my strength and support in this time of need. When taken from my sickbed to be with my husband in his dying moments, at first the suddenness of the stroke seemed too heavy to bear, and I cried to God to spare him to me,—not to take him away and leave me to labor alone. . . . When my husband was breathing out his life so quietly, without a groan, without a struggle, I felt that it would be selfishness in me to wish to throw my arms of affection around him and detain him here. He was like a tired

warrior lying down to rest. My heart can feel to its very depths, and yet I can tell you I have no tears to shed for the dead. My tears are for the living. . . .

"And now I take up my lifework alone. I thank my Saviour I have two sons He has given me to stand by my side. Henceforth the mother must lean upon the children; for the strong, brave, noblehearted husband is at rest. The turmoil with him is over. How long I shall fight the battles of life alone I cannot say; but there is one thing that I will say to you, and that is, that when I saw my husband breathe his last, I felt that Jesus was more precious to me than He ever had been in any previous hour of my life. When I stood by my first-born, and closed his eyes in death, I could say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' And I felt then that I had a Comforter in Jesus Christ. And when my little one was torn from my arms, and I could no longer see its little head upon the pillow by my side, then I could say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' And now he upon whose large affections I have leaned, with whom I have labored,—and we have been united in labor for thirty-six years,—is taken away; but I can lay my hands upon his eyes and say, 'I commit my treasure unto Thee until the morning of the resurrection.'

"In Jesus Christ all our hopes of eternal life are centered, so then let us ever labor for Him. He from henceforth is my Guide, and my Husband, and my Counselor, and my Friend. He will walk with me through the thorny paths of life, and at last we shall meet again where there is no parting, where there is no separation, and where none shall any more say, 'I am sick.' I yield my precious treasure; I bid him farewell; I do not go to his grave to weep. Nor can I shed any tears over my youngest nor my eldest sons. The morning of the resurrection is too bright. And then I look to that morning when the broken family links shall be reunited, and we shall see the King in His beauty, and behold His matchless charms, and cast our glittering crowns at His feet, and touch the golden harps, and fill all heaven with the strains of our music and songs to the Lamb. We will sing together there. We will triumph together around the great white throne."—*From life sketch by E. H. Gates, in brochure of Memorial Service held in Australia, Sept. 11, 1915.*

Facing the Hour of Death

This same spirit of consecration to God and His service marked the closing days of her own earthly life. A short time before her death, in an interview with another, she spoke of her courage as follows:

"My courage is grounded in my Saviour. My work is nearly ended. Looking over the past, I do not feel the least mite of despondency or discouragement. I feel so grateful that the Lord has withheld me from despair and discouragement, and that I can still hold the banner. I know Him whom I love, and in whom my soul trusteth."—*Life Sketches, pp. 443, 444.*

Referring to the prospect of death, she declared:

"I feel, the sooner the better; all the time that is how I feel—the sooner the better. I have not a discouraging thought, nor sadness. . . . I have nothing to complain of. Let the Lord take His way and do His work with me, so that I am refined and purified; and that is all I desire. I know my work is done; it is of no use to say anything else. I shall rejoice, when my time comes, that I am permitted to lie down to rest in peace. I have no desire that my life shall be prolonged."—*Id., p. 444.*

And to her son she remarked, a few weeks before she breathed her last:

"I am very weak. I am sure that this is my last sickness. I am not worried at the thought of dying. I feel comforted all the time, that the Lord is near me. I am not anxious. The preciousness of the Saviour has been so plain to me. He has been a friend. He has kept me in sickness and in health.

"I do not worry about the work I have done. I have done the best I could. I do not think that I shall be lingering long. I do not expect much suffering. I am thankful that we have the comforts of life in time of sickness. Do not worry. I go only a little before the others."—*Id., pp. 444, 445.*

The spirit breathed in the facsimile letter, in the message to her son, in the words spoken at her husband's funeral, and in these final quotations, marked the life of

Mrs. E. G. White. Her experience was one of earnest Christian labor, of sacrifice for the Master she loved. Separated oftentimes from her children, denied the comforts of home life in her extensive travels, handicapped frequently by physical suffering, meeting the natural prejudice and opposition which existed in many minds against her work, she labored on, faithfully and untiringly, even to the close of life. She rests from her labors, but her works follow her.

We thank God that He gave a prophet to the remnant church. No Seventh-day Adventist should be ashamed of this blessed truth. Rather we should rejoice that the Lord has in this manner visited His people, and again and again warned them of their danger in the midst of the evils which threaten the church at the present time. These messages, we believe, should be faithfully followed by every believer. Next to the Bible, and in connection with it, they should be read and studied. They throw a floodlight upon the Sacred Record. "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chron. 20:20.